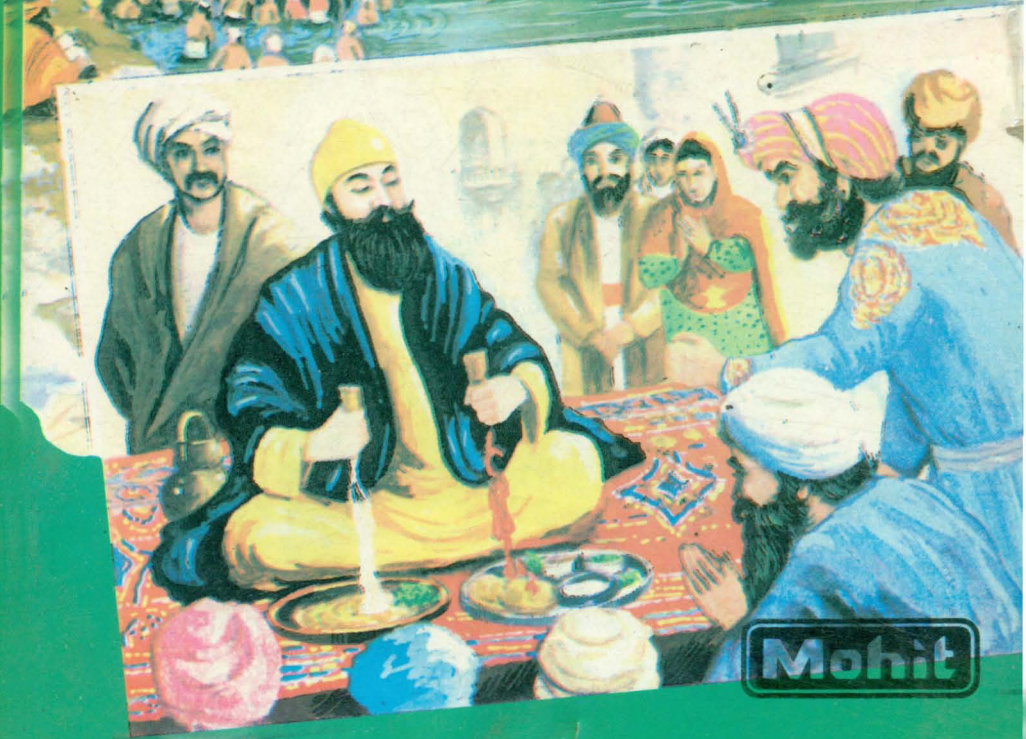
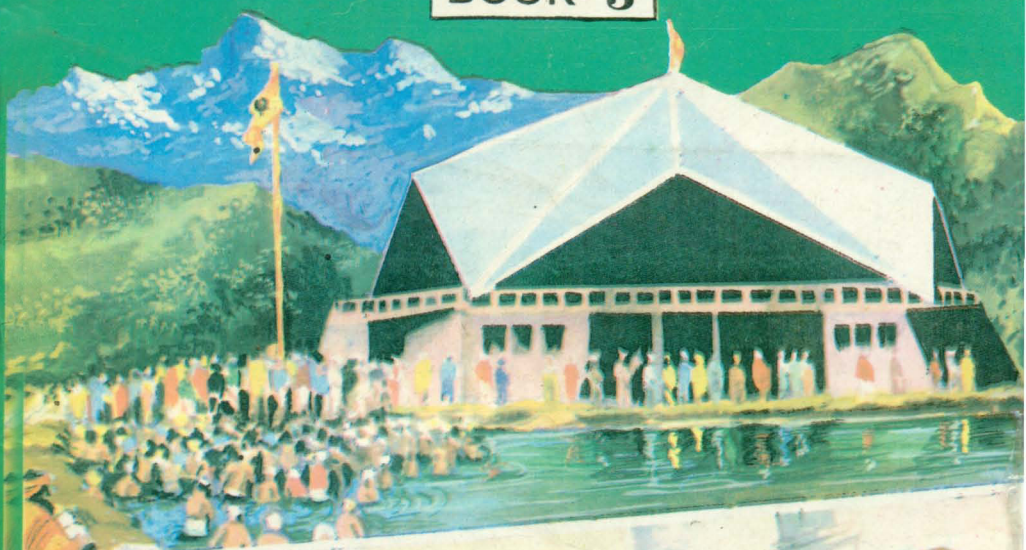


# Tales From SIKH HISTORY

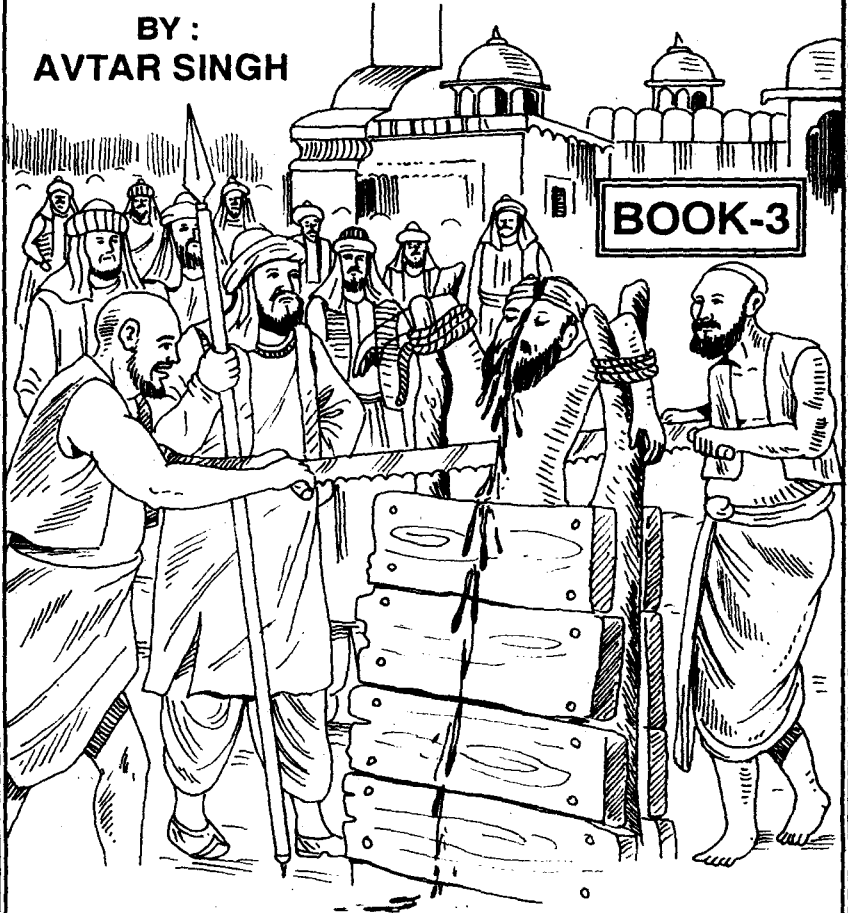
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# TALES FROM SIKH HISTORY

BY:  
AVTAR SINGH



**MOHIT ENTERPRISES**

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# Foreword

The basic objective of education is to light the lamp of knowledge in the minds of pupils. Such a knowledge is to help them to become better persons. The aim of moral education is to make the impressionable minds of children responsive to adorn their character with superior values and virtuous traits like, goodwill for others, selfless service, kindness, sympathy, tolerance, tenderness of heart, spirit of sacrifice and love of God and to defend their minds against the influence of base and inferior feelings like, falsehood, greediness, pride, vanity, jealousy, anger, intolerance, cruelty and deceit, lest these should take root and debase their character.

This book contains some events relating to the lives of Guru Har Gobind, Guru Har Rai, Guru Har Krishan and Guru Teg Bahadur. Under Guru Har Gobind, the saintly character of the Sikhs was transformed, making them saint-soldiers, who could stand the might of the oppressive Mughals in the battle-field. Under Guru Har Rai and Guru Har Krishan, the stress remained on the service of the suffering humanity. The personal character of Guru Teg Bahadur and his supreme sacrifice for the honour of Mother India deeply influenced people and resulted in the emergence of the Khalsa under Guru Gobind Singh. The reading of the book will provide historical information, as well as the inspiration to follow the path shown by the Great Gurus.

**AVTAR SINGH**

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# 1. God Saved Har Gobind

Prithia was a wicked person. He had no love for Guru Arjan and his family. His attitude towards the Guru was hostile and venomous. He was ever spitting venom one way or the other against the Guru. He was never tired of his attempts to cause discomfort to the Guru. Guru Nanak had enjoined "Whosoever wishes to follow the path of his faith, must come with his head on his palm. To tread on this path is walking on the sharp razor. He must be prepared to sacrifice his life for Divine love." So, to follow the true faith was not a bed of roses. But to Prithia the office of Guruship was a symbol of power, pelf and authority. He was not worthy of this pious position. So he failed to get it.

Prithia was a bad man. His wife, Karmo, was even worse. Guru Arjan Dev was childless. So, both the husband and his wife used to say, "Although we could not occupy the seat of Guruship yet it will fall into our lap like manna falling from heaven." They had the consolation that their son Meharban would become the Guru after Guru Arjan Dev. Their hopes rested on Meharban's taking the seat of Gurugaddi.

But God is merciful. He blessed Guru Arjan and Mata Ganga with a son. He was named Har Gobind. Guru Arjan Dev found a town after him. It was named Har gobindpur. The birth of Hargobind

was a matter of shock to Prithia and his wife Karmo. All their hopes and expectations of seeing Meharban seated on the Gurugaddi were dashed to the ground. Prince Hargobind was an obstruction, a hurdle in their way. They must think means to remove the hurdle. They must pave the way smooth for their son. Now onwards, their mind was occupied planning evil ways to kill the child Hargobind.

First, Prithia and Karmo hired the services of a nurse. She was bribed. She was asked to poison the child to death. They promised to give her more money after the execution of the plan.

She applied solution of poison on her breasts. She, then, went to the Guru's house. She congratulated Mata Ganga on the birth of her son. She spoke a number of words in praise of the child, Har Gobind. She said, "How sweet and lovely the child is! He is the light of your house. I feel so much love for him." Mata Ganga was pleased to hear all those good words. She, then, told the nurse that he did not suck milk from her breast. At this, the nurse took up the child. She pressed him close to her bosom. She, then, put him in her lap. She drew out one of her breasts. She tried to put the nipple of her breast into the child's mouth. She said, "Suck, my dear son, suck, it will satisfy you." The child did not open his mouth. He did not suck the milk from her breast. The solution of the poison

was strong. It cracked the skin of her breast. It crept into her blood veins. The result was that the greedy nurse died then and there. Mata Ganga Ji and Guru Arjan Dev Ji thanked God. Guru Arjan Dev composed a hymn, thanking God for His kindness. The attempt of Prithia and Karmo had failed. But instead of feeling sorry for their evil designs, they began to find some other device to kill the child. Soon they hit upon another evil plan.

There were snake-charmers in the town. Some of them had poisonous snakes in their possession. Prithia contacted a snake-charmer. He was given some money. He was promised more money after the completion of the assignment. He was asked to let loose a deadly poisonous cobra into the bedroom of child Hargobind. He was asked to do his job very cautiously. The snake-charmer went to the locality, where the Guru's family lived. He played on his Been. People gathered around him. He had many snakes in different baskets. He was carrying a large snake round his neck. The children of the locality and other people were amused to see the snakes dancing to the tune of the Been. After sometime, he stopped playing on his Been. The crowd dispersed. Very cleverly, he let loose a deadly poisonous snake near the child Hargobind, who was sleeping in a room. The attendant of the child was very active. He saw the large black snake. He, at once, killed it with his



stick before letting it bite the child. Again Mata Ganga and Guru Arjan Dev thanked God, the Almighty. Guru Arjan Dev again composed a hymn thanking God for His act of protection.

Prithia had failed, again, but he was made of a strange mould. It never struck him to desist from the wrong path. His conscience was in deep slumber. It never awoke to remind him of his sins. When he failed in one of his evil plans he would follow another.

He, then, contacted the Brahman servant of the Guru. His duty was to feed the child, Har Gobind. One day, he mixed poison in the cup of curds, which he was going to feed the child, Hargobind. He tried to put the curds into the child's mouth. But Hargobind did not open it. He refused to take it. By chance, Guru Arjan Dev ji came into the room. He held the cup of curds in his hand. He said to the child, "Hargobind, take the curds. It is sweet," Hargobind turned away the cup with his hand. Guru Arjan Dev Ji felt that there was something wrong with the curds. He put the cup of curds before a dog. The dog, at once, ate it up. But within minutes it fell down and died.

The Brahman servant turned pale with fear. He was caught doing that sinful act. He began to tremble. He begged Guru Arjan Dev to forgive him. He admitted that he had fallen a prey to greed. He was misled to the evil path. He told that

Prithia had given him money for that hateful act of feeding poisonous curds to Har Gobind.

The holy Guru, Arjan Dev, kept his calm. He thanked the Lord for His grace. He composed another hymn thanking Him for saving child Har-Gobind. He said nothing to the greedy, faithless, Brahman. He let him go home. The inner conscience of the Brahman cursed him. He felt that he had done such a wrong, as was not pardonable. He was under complete dejection. He felt a severe pain in his stomach. In a short while he died.



## **2. Synthesis of Devotion and Soldierly Valour**

The martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev ji gave a new direction to the course of history of the Punjab. It was caused because of the bigotry of Jahangir. He came to throne in October 1605. He ordered the execution of Guru Arjan Dev through tortures in May 1606. The Guru was boiled in cauldron. He was made to sit on a red hot iron pan. Burning sand was poured over him. Thereafter, he was thrown into the river, Ravi. He bore all the ordeals treating them as the will of God. He did not blame any one. He did not utter a cry. He kept meditating. He endured all those sufferings for his faith and for the Divine love. His only offence was that his teachings were dear to both Hindus and Muslims. Not only the Hindus, but also the Muslims by and large were becoming his followers. In the words of Jahangir himself, they (the Muslims) blew his trumpet. In fact, they liked his teachings. The fanatic Mullhas and the bigoted Emperor, Jahangir could not tolerate it. Thus, the Holiest saint was inhumanly tortured to death.

Guru Har Gobind Ji was just a boy of eleven, when his father made the crown sacrifice. Before leaving for Lahore, Guru Arjan Dev Ji had instructed Baba Budda Ji and other Sikhs to install

Har Gobind as their Guru after him.

The news of Guru Arjan's martyrdom reached Amritsar. The Sikhs were sad, but Har Gobind kept his calm. He said, "There should be no mourning. Baba Budda Ji and other Sikhs will read the Granth Sahib and the Ragis (musicians) will sing the Guru's hymns." The reading of Granth Sahib and the recitation of Shabads lasted for ten days. Then prayers were offered and sacred food (Krah Parshad) was distributed among the assembled Sikhs. Thus ended the rites for Guru Arjan Dev's Martyrdom.

After it, Baba Budda Ji led Guru Har Gobind to the throne. He seated him on the Guru's throne. He, then, placed a Seli before the Guru and requested him to wear it. A Seli was a sort of woolen cord. The holymen wore it either round their neck or tied it round their forehead. The first five Gurus had either tied it round their forehead or worn it as a necklace.

Guru Har Gobind did not wear the Seli. He said to Baba Budda, "Please preserve the Seli in the Toshakhana (Treasury). I am not going to wear it. Time has now changed. In place of it, I shall wear two swords. On my right side, I shall wear the sword of Piri and on my left side, I shall wear the sword of Miri."

The Sikhs were in confusion. They did not understand the motive of their Guru by wearing the

swords of Miri and Piri.

Guru Har Gobind Ji, though still a boy, was very wise and farsighted. Finding that the Sikhs were in confusion he explained, "We will have to change ourselves with the changing times. We are exposed to the tyrannical rule of the bigots. Our infant Church is in danger. The enemies of our faith are bent upon destroying it. They seem to have resolved to uproot the tree of our faith root and branch. Guru Arjan Dev has given the supreme sacrifice for his faith. We have to defend it against the onslaughts of the adversaries. We shall also have to maintain the saintly character enshrined by Guru Nanak and the successive Gurus. Thus, my Sikhs will now be the saint-soldiers. They will be saints as far as personal character and religious matters are concerned. They will be soldiers, ready to face the enemy of their faith in the battle-field. But their fight will be only for the right cause. It will be for the defence of their faith."

Some Sikhs thought that the new path of the Guru was different from the one adopted by the previous Gurus. But Bhai Gurdas and other Sikhs later on admitted that Guru Nanak and the other Gurus too, had taught them to accept the challenge of the oppressors. Oppression must be fought against. To fight against oppression should be treated as God's decree.

The Guru said to the Sikhs, "Henceforth, I shall wear the swords of Miri and Piri. The sword of Piri denotes that I am your spiritual leader. I shall guide you in your religious matters. The sword of Miri will be the symbol of my temporal powers. I shall guide you in your worldly affairs too. Now onwards, I shall be a saint as well as a warrior."

There were Masands all over the country. Masands were the preachers as well as Guru's officials. They had their specific area of operation, where they preached the teachings of the Guru. They also collected the offerings from the Sikhs. It was obligatory for the true Sikh to contribute 1/10 of his income to the Guru's Langar and other welfare works. The Masands visited the Guru on important occasions and presented their collections to him. The Guru sent message to the Masands to ask the Sikhs to pay the tithe in the form of horses and weapons.

The Guru built the Akal Takhat facing Harmandir Sahib. A platform, identical to a king's throne in shape, was built in the building of the Akal Takhat. Here he sat like kings during the day. It was here that the offerings were accepted. Here he settled the disputes among the Sikhs. Sitting on this throne he watched the wrestling matches, feats of swords-man-ship and other war like acts of the warriors. It was here that the musicians and singers sang war songs and ballads. All those

activities were aimed at transforming the Sikhs into invincible saint- soldiers.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji had taken extraordinary care in bringing up Har Gobind. He was imparted the best training in horse riding, swords-man-ship and archery under the guidance of Baba Buddha Ji. Guru Har Gobind grew to be the finest sportsman, strong in body and towering in personality. He was the most handsome man of his times. He wanted to see his Sikhs strong in body and mind, but pious and pure at heart.

While sitting in the Harmandar Sahib during morning and evening sessions, he attended only to the spiritual matters. Nothing of the political nature was discussed there. The Kirtan of Gurbani and the reading of Granth Sahib were the only activities undertaken there. Here Guru Har Gobind Ji acted as the spiritual guide to his Sikhs. The Akal Takhat became the seat, where political and worldly affairs were discussed.

The wearing of two swords of Piri and Miri had made Guru Har Gobind both the religious as well as the political leader of the Sikhs. His followers began to address him as the True King (Sachcha Padshah). For them, he was the Lord of two worlds i.e. the present and the next.

### **3. Guru Har Gobind And Jahangir**

There was a visible change in the living style of the Guru. The number of his followers was increasing rapidly. A large number of youngmen placed their services at his disposal. As for their wages, they required nothing, but food from the common kitchen, which was free to all; and a dress once after six months. They were ever ready to lay down their lives for the Guru's cause. Those Sikhs were given arms and horses. They were enlisted as the Guru's soldiers. They became the standing army of the Guru. The Guru had his own armed body guards always accompanying him. The Guru was fond of hunting. He wore crest on his head and kept the hawk. On his hunting games, he was invariably followed by his armed retinue. The fine horses, the crest, the hawk, the armed bodyguards and his encouragement to heroic feats, were all the symbols of royalty. Thus the change from saint to saint-soldier was obvious.

The bigot Mullhas, especially the Muslim religious leaders from Sirhind and Lahore complained against the Guru to Jahangir. Diwan Chandu Mal also put into his ears that the young Guru was making preparations to avenge the death of his father. The bigot Mullhas were burning with



anger because the Muslims were also accepting the Guru as their true king.

They wanted to stop his influence not only on the Muslims but the Hindus also. They wanted to see the Hindus of Punjab joining their faith, but the converse was happening. They complained to Jahangir that the Guru was bent upon staging a revolt against his rule.

Consequently, the Guru was summoned to the King's court at Delhi. Mata Ganga, Bhai Gurdas and Baba Budda Ji advised the Guru to honour the summons and see the Emperor, Jahangir.

The Guru set out for Delhi along with some of his armed Sikhs. He reached the bank of the river Yamuna. He put up his camp at Majnu's hillock. The following day, he went to see Jahagir.

Jahangir received the Guru with due regards. He was impressed by his charming manners, manly bearing and sportsman's physique. He discussed certain religious matters with the Guru. The Guru made clear the King's doubts by reciting hymns from the Granth Sahib. He was totally satisfied that the principles and teachings of the Guru were worthy of praise. He admired the Guru for his noble qualities. He found that the complaints against the Guru were baseless. He tried to make friends with the Guru.

Jahangir liked the company of the Guru. They had been meeting daily in the court. One day, he

said to the Guru, "I have come to know that you love the game of hunting. You are an expert in swords-man-ship. Let us go out for the game of hunting." The Guru agreed to accompany the Emperor on his hunting tour.

They went to the forest for the game. The King was on the back of his horse. The Guru was also riding on a fine horse. All of sudden a ferocious tiger came out of a bush. It was about to spring upon the King. Jahangir, the King, was terror stricken. Guru HarGobind, at once, alighted from his horse. He came in between the Emperor and the tiger. With the single stroke of his sword, he made the tiger fell down on the ground. Within minutes it was lifeless.

Jahangir was stunned at the bold feat of the Guru. He thanked the Guru for saving his life. He said to the Guru, "But for you, I would have been torn to pieces by the tiger. Today you saved me from sure death. I thank you." He made friends with the Guru. He liked his company. He took him to Agra with him. When, he set out for the valley of Kashmir for summer respite, he said to the Guru, "It will be a matter of pleasure for me, if you join my company." The Guru agreed and he went to Kashmir along with the Emperor, Jahangir. The relations between the Guru and Emperor Jahangir, remained cordial for sometime.

## 4. The Deliverer

The friendship between Guru Har Gobind Ji and Emperor Jahangir did not last long. The latter did not like the independent character of the Guru. The bigot nobles, who had brought him to the throne, forced him to keep Guru Har Gobind far from the Punjab. They argued that the Muslims had been becoming his disciples. They said that the Muslim girls had been marrying the Hindu youngmen. To arrest this trend the Guru must be sent away from the Punjab.

The Guru had many Muslims as his friends. There were many Muslim saints, who admired him and held him in great esteem. But Jahangir did not try to find out the facts. In order to please his co-religious fanatics, he arrested Guru Har Gobind Ji. He deported him to the Fort of Gwalior.

The Sikhs were very sad. Their Guru was in the Fort of Gwalior. He was a prisoner. They could not have his pious sight in Amritsar. They began to visit the Gwalior Fort. Groups after groups of the devotees started their march towards Gwalior. They were not allowed to see their favourite spiritual Guide. They kissed the walls of the Fort. They peeped inside to have the glimpse of their saviour. For days, they waited for the sight of their Guru. The imperial troops and other people were impressed by their devotion to the Guru.

There were fifty two rulers (Rajas) imprisoned there in the Gwalior Fort. They were not treated well. They were not provided with sufficient food. Guru Har Gobind was supplied enough food. He shared his food with the Rajas. He consoled them. He advised them to repeat the name of God. He taught them to have faith in God. He said that God would surely come to their help. He would bring an end to the days of their sufferings.

The company of Guru Har Gobind provided them with relief. They joined him in his daily prayers. Their minds ceased crying over their misfortunes. They found in the Guru, the Lord, who had come to deliver them out of the confines of the Fort. He had come to enable them to leave the hateful stone walls for the fresh air outside.

Sai Mian Mir, the holy Sufi saint of Lahore, and some other wise men told Jahangir that it was not just on his part to keep a holy man imprisoned. The devotion of the Sikhs for their Guru also had impressed him. Thus, after two years of prison life, Guru Har Gobind was ordered to be released by Jahangir.

The jail officials said to the Guru, "Holy Lord! You are released by the Emperor. You are free to move out of the Fort and proceed to the Punjab". Hearing the release of the Guru, the fifty two rulers (Rajas) were disappointed. They had forgotten their sufferings in the company of the Guru. They

were being treated considerably better in the company of the Guru. They thought that they would have to fall back into the bad old days.

The Guru pacified their minds. He consoled them saying that he would not leave the prison without them. He sent a message to the Emperor that he would not leave the prison alone. He would take out the Rajas with him. The Emperor ordered that all those Rajas who could catch hold of the Guru's hands and dress, would be freed.

At it the Guru got prepared a large shirt with fifty strings attached to it. Two rulers held the hands of the Guru, and each of the remaining fifty caught hold of each string of the Guru's shirt. Thus, all the fifty two prisoners came out of the Fort along with the Guru. Indeed, they were very thankful to the Guru. As the Guru had got the release of 52 prisoners, he was called (Bandi Chhore) the deliverer by the obliged Rajas and the people at large.

## **5. The Power of True Love & Devotion**

Guru HarGobind was greatly loved by his Sikhs. They always longed to serve their Guru with the most precious things they had. They had the faith that the Guru heard their calls of love and devotion.

Once Guru HarGobind was hunting in the jungle area of the Malwa region of the Punjab. A poor Sikh heard that the Guru was staying in the neighbourhood of his village. A keen desire to serve the Guru kindled in his heart. He was a labourer, a daily wage earner. He had nothing to spare to offer to the Guru. He decided to serve the Guru with Missi Roti. He revealed his heart's desire to his wife. She was even more interested to avail herself of the chance of serving the Guru. But finding themselves humble and poor, they were afraid that the Guru would not like their coarse Missi Roti. Then they opined that the Guru preferred love to tasty dishes.

Next day, the lady of the house, ground wheat and gram on the hand mill. She mixed salt, spices and onion pieces into the flour. She kneaded the flour reciting Gurbani. She, then, baked Missi Rotis. She prepared the curds. She placed the meal in a plate and covered it with a clean piece

of cloth. Both the husband and the wife began to wait for their Guru. They said to each other, "We shall take our meals only after the Guru has taken our Missi Roti and curds".

Their call of love reached the Guru. He was hunting in a nearby forest. He turned his horse towards the path, which led to the poor Sikh's house. The galloping horse marched onwards. When it reached the house, the Guru arrested its speed. He alighted from the horse. He went inside the house. He said to the couple, "My dear Sikh couple, "I am very hungry. Give me Missi Roti and curds".

The Sikh couple was very glad to find the Guru at their door. They very lovingly served him the cooked food. The Guru relished it. He blessed the couple and mounting his horse, he was out of their sight within minutes.

(2)

Again two newly turned Sikhs, Rupa and Sadhu were working in their field. It was mid summer. The sun was very hot. They had a new earthen pitcher with them. They had filled it with clean water. They had fastened a string round its neck. They had tied the string to a branch of a shady tree. The pitcher was kept hanging in the cool shade of the tree. It was a device to cool the water. Rupa and Sadhu had been working since morning. Now it

was noon. They felt thirsty. They stopped their work. They came under the tree to take rest. They wanted to drink water. One of them untied the string and brought down the pitcher. They touched the earthen pitcher. It was cool. They thought that the water of the new earthen pitcher would be very sweet and cool. They desisted themselves from taking such a cool water. They wished that first it must be taken by the Guru. They did not take the water. They put back the pitcher at its old place.

Sitting in the shade of the tree, they prayed to their Guru to come and accept their offering of cool water. The Guru was not very far off. He heard their sincere prayer, coming from their inner-selves. He changed the course and set his horse marching towards the field of Rupa and Sadhu. Soon, he reached the spot where the Sikhs had been waiting for the Guru's arrival. Rupa stood up. He greeted the Guru. He held the reins of the Guru's horse. The Guru alighted from his horse. He said to his Sikhs, "I am feeling very thirsty. Only very cool water of a new earthen pitcher can quench my thirst. Give me such a cool water." The Sikhs folded their hands. They placed the pitcher before the Guru. They poured water in to a deep saucer and lovingly presented it to the Guru. The Guru was delighted to drink such a cool and sweet water. He blessed the two men. He then mounted his horse and mended his way. The Sikhs were



very pleased. The Guru had responded to their love for him. They, then, drank the water from the pitcher.

(3)

The Masands collected the offerings from the Sikhs of their areas and then presented those to the Guru at Amristar on special gatherings. There lived in Srinagar (Kashmir) an old woman. Her name was Bhag Bhari. She was poor and old. But she was a devout Sikh. Very lovingly, she had spun silken yarn and made a cloak for the Guru's dress. She had the desire to present it to the Guru herself. She had no means to visit the far off Amritsar. Moreover, she was old and feeble in body. She prayed to the Guru to come to her humble cottage and accept her offering of a cloak. She kept the cloak in a box. She fixed her mind on the Guru. She had the conviction that the Guru would, one day, visit her humble cottage and himself receive her love soaked offering.

She now awaited for the Guru's arrival. As per chance, the Guru had been camping at Srinagar. He had gone there in the company of Emperor Jahangir. He felt the call of the old devout Sikh, Mai Bhag Bhari. He set out towards her house. Soon he was standing at her door.

The Guru said, "Gentle mother, I have come, myself, to receive the offering. Bring me the cloak

you have so lovingly prepared for me. I shall put it on." Mai Bhag Bhari was overwhelmed with emotion to hear the Guru's words. Her great desire was going to be fulfilled. She brought out the cloak and presented it to the Guru. The Guru put it on. He blessed the gentle lady. So, you see, how the Guru was loved by his Sikhs and how deep their devotion was! A Gurudwara called Gurudwara Chhatti Padshahi stands in Srinager to commemorate the Guru's visit.

## **6. The Battle of Amritsar**

Emperor Jahangir died in 1627. His son Shah Jahan became the new Emperor. In 1634, he and his men were hunting near Amritsar. Some Sikhs were also on a hunting game close to them. It so happened that one of the hawks of the royal party slipped away. They searched for it in the jungle. They could find no trace of the hawk. In fact, it had been captured by the Sikhs. The royal party of the hunters learnt that their hawk was in the control of the Sikhs. They asked the Sikhs to hand the hawk over to them. The Sikhs were not ready to part with the hawk. They argued that their hawk had brought it over to them. Going by the rules of the game of hunting, it belonged to them.

The King's party did not listen to the arguments. They picked up a quarrel with the Sikhs. The skirmish that ensued resulted in the death of two Mughal soldiers. Gulam Rasool, a Mughal officer was also wounded.

The matter was reported to Shah Jahan. He flew into rage. He sent an army of 7000 Mughal soldiers under the command of General Mukhlis Khan against the Sikhs.

Guru Har Gobind had only 700 Sikh and Pathan soldiers with him. He faced the 7000 troops. One soldier of the Guru had to fight against ten soldiers of the enemy. A fierce battle was fought near the

present site of Khalsa College Amritsar. The Guru's soldiers fought very boldly. They killed General Mukhlis Khan. They also killed many Mughal soldiers. They routed the Mughal troops. They made them leave the battle-field and flee.

It was a total victory of the Guru's forces. Bhai Jetha, Bhai Bidhi Chand and Painside Khan showed their valour. A number of Sikh warriors also died fighting bravely against the Mughal soldiers.

This victory over the Mughal forces made the Sikhs more confident.

## **7. Bhai Bidhi Chand Brought Back the Horses**

Guru Har Gobind was very fond of horses of fine breed. He had enjoined upon his Sikhs to offer him good horses and weapons. Bakhat Mal and Tara Chand were the two Masands functioning in Afghanistan. A faithful Sikh brought two horses of a very fine breed from Turkistan for the Guru. At Kabul, he gave them to Bakhat Mal and Tara Chand. He requested them to take the horses to Amritsar and present them to the Guru as his humble offering.

The horses were exceptionally good. They had been named Dilbag and Gulbag by the Sikh. The Masands took charge of the horses. They started their journey for Amritsar. They were thinking that the Guru would be very pleased to receive those fine horses. They knew about the love of the Guru for good horses.

As Bakhat Mal and Tara Chand, the two Masands, reached Lahore, they were encircled by the soldiers of the Governor of Lahore. They were forced to part with the horses. The soldiers took away the two horses to the Governor. He admired the horses. He decided to present those fine horses to the Emperor, Shah Jahan. He ordered to keep the horses in the royal stables at Lahore.

Bakhat Mal and Tara Chand reached Amritsar.

They related to the Guru what had happened with them. The Sikhs were enraged to hear that the Governor of Lahore had forcibly taken the possession of Guru's horses. They were not prepared to tolerate that sort of naked rapacity. They wanted to get them back to the Guru. They thought over many a ways. Finally, the Guru tapped the back of Bhai Bidhi Chand. He was entrusted with the task of bringing back the forcibly taken horses for the Guru.

Bhai Bidhi Chand was very daring, fearless and a tactful man. He was one of the Guru's trusted followers. He made up his mind and set out for Lahore. Reaching Lahore, he disguised himself as a grass cutter. He got service in the royal stables. His duty was to feed grass to the horses. Gradually, he became a groom, who looked after the royal horses. He cultivated friendship with Dilbag and Gulbag, the two horses. They became attached to him. He could ride on them. They became so familiar that they could be responsive to his calls.

One night, when no one was watching, he came out of the royal stables with Dilbag. He mounted it. Riding Dilbag, he reached the outer wall of the fort. A branch of the river Ravi then flowed just under the fort. The currents of the water kept washing the fort walls. Bhai Bidhi Chand made the horse scale the outer wall and jump into the river below. It was a very dangerous and daring feat. But both the rider and the horse did it safely.

Riding on Dilbag, Bhai Bidhi Chand made his way to the Guru. He was successful in his attempt. He presented the horse to the Guru. The Guru was delighted to see the horse. The sight of the horse made him pine for its companion. So, he again asked Bidhi Chand to try to bring the second horse also. Bhai Bidhi Chand was always ready to honour the Guru's bidding.

In Lahore, there was a great hue and cry for the stolen horse. The Governor had announced, "Any one finding the horse, or giving clue of the stolen horse will be richly rewarded."

The second horse Gulbag, too, was feeling sick at the absence of his companion. He stopped taking food. So, the officials of the royal stables wanted to trace the first horse very soon. Many expert 'khojis' (scouts) came, but they could not find any clue. They failed to give any useful clue. They were all sent back.

Bhai Bidhi Chand disguised himself as a Khoji (scout). He reached the royal stables. He convinced the officials that he would provide them not only with the clue but also tell the person with whom the horse was. They decided to give him a chance to show his skill.

Bhai Bidhi Chand said, "Leave me alone to think how the thief took away the horse. He approached Gulbag, patted his back and mounted it. He rode towards the outer wall of the fort. The officials and

other servants of the stables thought that he was finding the clue. Reaching close to the outer wall, he again made his horse scale over the wall and jump below into the river Ravi. While jumping he shouted loudly, "I am Bidhi Chand taking the horse to its rightful owner, the true king, Guru Har Gobind. I had taken the first horse using the same device. I challenge you, if you dare, recover the horses from my Lord, the True King Guru Har Gobind."

Thus, Bidhi Chand revealed, where the horses would be. The Governor of Lahore reported the matter to the Emperor, Shah Jahan. He sent a powerful expedition against the Guru. General Lala Beg and General Kanwar Beg led their forces. The Emperor also ordered other Generals, Abdullah Khan, Salim Khan and Behlol Khan to co-operate with Generals Lala Beg and Kanwar Beg.

Sensing danger the Guru marched towards the deserts of Bhatinda. The royal forces followed him. A fierce battle was fought at the village Lahira. Both the Generals, Lala Beg and Kanwar Beg were killed by the Guru. The Guru's soldiers killed many a Mughal soldiers. The Sikhs, too, suffered losses. The Guru lost Bhai Jetha Ji in the battle. Other Sikh warriors also laid down their lives. But the Mughal soldiers were defeated and Guru Har Gobind won the battle.



## 8. Kaulan

Rustam Khan was the Qazi of Lahore. The duty of the Qazi was to dispense justice. Guru Nanak had condemned the Qazis of his times. He blamed them as bribe seekers and doing no justice to the people. Rustam Khan was the Chief Qazi of Lahore. He was a fanatic Muslim. He discriminated between the Hindus and the Muslims. He and Musaud Sirhindi, a leader of Naqash Bandi sect of the Muslims, were against Guru Har Gobind. They found in him a hurdle for them. They could not convert the Hindus to their faith; because the Guru's teachings, which were for the whole mankind, stood in their way. Both the Hindus as well as the Muslims were his devotees.

Kaulan was the daughter of Qazi Rustam Khan. She was a pious girl. She did not like the fanaticism of her father. She fell under the influence of Sai Mian Mir. Mian Mir was a great Sufi Saint of Lahore. He had laid the foundation stone of the Harmandar Sahib at Amritsar. He had great regards for the Sikh Gurus. Kaulan was attracted towards the Sikh way of life. She disclosed her mind to Sai Mian Mir. He helped her and she reached the court of Guru Har Gobind.

The Qazi was furious. He could not tolerate to see her daughter adopting the Sikh faith. He, Masaud Sirhindi and other bigot Muslims, com-

plained against the Guru. Jahangir was, then, well disposed towards the Guru. He did not pay much attention. The Qazi failed to do anything to harm the Guru.

After the death of Jahangir, Shah Jahan occupied the throne. He was not liberal in religious matters. He did not allow the Hindu temples in Banaras to be completed. He punished those Hindus of the Punjab who had married Muslim girls. To escape the wrath of the Emperor, some 4000 Hindus had to change their religion.

The Qazi again brought the case of Kaulan before Shah Jahan. Shah Jahan sent a force of 7000 strong against the Guru. Two sons of the Qazi also went to fight against the Guru. However, they were all defeated by the Guru.

Kaulan remained in Amritsar as a pious lady. Guru Har Gobind treated her very kindly. The Sikhs respected her. Guru Har Gobind built a tank and named it Kaulsar. Thus, he immortalised her. The Kaulsar tank reminds us of Kaulan even today.

## 9. Baba Atal

Guru Har Gobind Ji had five sons. They were Baba Gurditta, Baba Suraj Mal, Guru Teg Bahadur, Baba Ani Rai and Baba Atal. Baba Atal was a lovely child. He was smart and very active. He was a sports loving child. He liked playing with his playmates. Playing with a ball and a stick was his favourite game. This game was very popular among the children of the old Punjab.

Baba Atal was endowed with Divine powers. Whatever he said in his general way came out to be true. His father knew that boy Atal possessed great powers. He was very fond of him. He showered on him his fatherly love. Sometimes, he said to him, "Dear Atal, God has given you uncommon powers, you should preserve them. You should not waste them over small things." In his answer Atal would say "Respected Father! You are the store house of all powers, divine as well as worldly. I am your son. It is my right to get my share. Thus, I can make use of the powers. It will never make you poorer."

Baba Atal had a playmate. His name was Mohan. He was eight years old. Baba Atal was nine years old. Thus, they were of the same age. They were very close friends. Daily, they played the game of ball and stick. One day they continued playing late in the evening. It grew dark, so they

could not play the game properly. They decided to stop the game for the night. They would again start playing early in the morning. Mohan was to throw the ball and Baba Atal was to hit it with his stick. After arriving at this decision, they parted for their homes.

Lying on his bed at night, Baba Atal was thinking about his turn to hit the ball. Mohan had taken his turn. He had been hitting the ball and Baba Atal had been throwing it to him. He had been running to pick the ball after every hit of Mohan's stick. He would hit the ball with his stick. It would amuse him.

On the other hand, Mohan reached his home. He took his dinner and went to sleep. At night, he got up from his bed to answer a call of nature. It was pitch dark. He could see nothing. There was a cobra in the courtyard of the house. Mohan stepped on it. The cobra bit him. He cried for help. His parents woke up. They rushed out. They found that Mohan had been bitten by the cobra. It was a poisonous snake. Mohan died in a very short time.

The next morning, Baba Atal waited for his friend for some time, but he did not come. That kind of wait made him uneasy. So, he himself, went to Mohan's house to ask him for his turn of the game.

He found that a large number of mourners had gathered there. The ladies were crying loudly. Mohan's mother was beating her breast. Baba Atal

saw Mohan lying on the floor. His body was covered with a white sheet of cloth.

He called Mohan. There was no response. The mourners told him that Mohan had been bitten by a deadly snake and that he had died. But Baba Atal said, "No, he is alright, he is only making excuses to escape from his turn of throwing the ball to me. I will not let him go. He will have to play with me."

Saying so, he stepped forward. He uncovered his face. He placed his stick at his neck and said, "Do not pretend to be sleeping. Get up at once. I am here to take you to the field. Open your eyes and get up. I must have my turn with the stick."

Just then, Mohan got up as if he were sleeping. He had been dead for a few hours. He got himself ready. Baba Atal took him out along with him to the field. They started playing the game.

It was a strange experience for the people. They had never seen a dead person regaining life. Mohan's parents were very happy. The mournful atmosphere changed and in its place there was joy and happiness.

The news of Mohan's coming back to life after death became the talk of the town. In every home the members were talking of Baba Atal's supernatural powers. Guru Har Gobind Ji also heard the news.

He called Baba Atal to him. He showed his displeasure to him for making the show of his powers. He told Baba Atal that he had acted against the will of God. He said, "No mother wants to lose her child. On the death of their children, the mothers would ask you to revive them back to life. It would be a meddling with the ways of God. In order to put an end to this show of miracle, you will have to depart to the house of God."

Baba Atal took his bath in the tank of nectar. He changed his dress. He put on new clothes. He walked around the Harmandar Sahib for four times. He, then, went towards the Kaulsar tank. He sat on the bank of the tank with his face towards the Harmandar Sahib. He, then, prayed to God. While sitting in composure he breathed his last. He gave life to Mohan; but himself took leave for the heavenly abode.

Hearing that Baba Atal had given up his life, the ladies began to wail. His body was brought home. Guru Har Gobind said, "Baba Atal's soul has reached its destination. He was here for a short period of time. We must bow before the will of God. What pleases Him is good. There should be no weeping and wailing. Recite Gurbani and read the Granth Sahib."

Baba Atal's body was cremated near Kaulsar. Guru Har Gobind said, "Baba Atal had seen only nine springs of his life. He has left for heavenly

abode at his will. We should build a nine storeyed temple in his memory. It would be seen from far and wide. It would become a sacred place, where the hungry people would be served with baked loaves.

A magnificent nine storeyed Gurudwara was built near the site of the cremation. It is called Gurudwara Baba Atal.

The devotees offer baked loaves at this Gurudwara. Hungry people are seen here in good number. They are served with the baked loaves. They repeatedly say, "Baba Atal, Pakki Pakae ghal" (Baba Atal send us well baked loaves.)



## 10. Painde Khan

Guru Har Gobind Ji had some paid Muslim soldiers in his army. Many adventurous and war loving Muslims wanted to enlist themselves in his army. Once a group of Pathans came to the Guru. They requested him to take them into his service as paid soldiers.

Painde Khan had come along with that group of Pathans. He was just a boy of sixteen; but he was a giant with a muscular body. His manly bearing, large eyes and strong body pleased the Guru. The Guru enlisted those Pathans in his army as paid soldiers. They were given weapons. They were put under training. Special arrangements were, however, made for the training of Painde Khan. He was sanctioned special diet. He was provided with every facility.

Painde Khan grew up to be a very strong man. He was so powerful that he could even lift a horse on his body. He was a mighty wrestler. He was a good athlete. In the use of sword and arrow he was superb. He was an excellent soldier. The Guru had made him a commander. A good number of Pathan soldiers were put under his command.

The Guru treated him very kindly. He had celebrated his marriage paying all the expenses. He had built a good house for him at Har-gobindpur. He had been, often, receiving valuable



presents from the Guru. The Guru treated him as his brother.

Painde Khan, too, was sincerely serving the Guru. In the battle of Amritsar, he and his Pathan soldiers fought very bravely against the Mughal troops sent by the Governor of Lahore. He, himself, killed many a Mughal soldiers. Again, he fought against the Mughal forces in the battle of Lahira. The Mughals forces were defeated and their generals were killed.

All those victories of the Guru turned the head of Painde Khan. As he had led the Guru's troops in those victories, he began to feel that he had been the cause of Guru's repeated victories.

He became so proud and vain that he boasted, "The credit of Guru's success goes to me. Had I not been leading the Sikh troops, they would have fled from the field." Those remarks were very insulting for the brave Sikhs.

When Guru Har Gobind heard about those boasts of Painde Khan, he was greatly displeased. Painde Khan was a paid soldier, but the Sikhs soldiers were fighting for their Guru. So, the Guru decided not to utilise PaindeKhan's services in any future battle. Still he had a soft corner in his heart for Painde Khan.

It was through Guru's efforts, that he had become an excellent soldier. The Guru had given him the love of a brother. So, the Guru did not stop

giving him valuable presents. But it was decided not to utilise his services in any future battle.

One day, a devout Sikh presented to the Guru, a very fine horse, a hawk, a costly dress, and some weapons. The Guru gave the hawk to his son Gurditta. He gave all the other things to Painde Khan. The Guru said to him, "Keep all these things with you. Whenever you visit my court, you must be in proper dress. This costly dress and weapons should adorn your person and the fine horse should give you the ride." Painde Khan accepted the presents. He thanked the Guru. He promised to do as directed by the Guru.

Painde Khan took the presents to his home. His son-in-law Usman Khan saw the presents. He asked him to give those costly presents to him. Painde Khan refused to part with those presents. He said to Usman Khan, "The Guru has ordered me to visit his Darbar wearing the dress and weapons and riding on this horse. So, I cannot give these things to you. The Guru will be very displeased if I give them to any body."

But Usman Khan got all those things from his mother-in-law. Painde Khan had also stolen the hawk, given to Baba Gurditta. It had also reached Usman Khan's house. The Guru came to know that the presents and the hawk had reached Usman Khan's house. All those things were then in Usman's possession.

The Guru, at once, sent for Painde Khan. Painde Khan came in the presence of the Guru in a shabby dress. The Guru asked him, "Why have you come in the court without putting on the costly dress and weapons and without riding on the horse. Where are all the presents given to you.?"

Painde Khan folded his hands and said, "I swear that the presents are with me at my house. As soon as I, received your order I ran to you. I did not put on the dress and weapons fearing that it would take time. All the things are quite safe in my house."

The Guru, then, asked him if he knew about the hawk given to Baba Gurditta. He, again, swore and said that he knew nothing about the hawk.

The Guru sent Bhai Bidhi Chand to bring all those things from Usman Khan's house. Bhai Bidhi Chand found Usman Khan sleeping in his house. Without disturbing him, he took all the things including the horse and rode back to the Guru's court. He placed all those things before the Guru.

Painde Khan had, then, nothing to say. But he did not feel sorry for his act of disobedience. He was not ashamed of swearing falsely before the Guru. He did not beg the Guru's pardon. So, the Guru expelled him from the Darbar. Painde Khan got angry. He said to the Guru, "I shall go to the Emperor. I shall complain against you. You will

suffer. I shall have my revenge. I shall show you, how Painsde Khan beats your Sikh soldiers in the battle-field." The Guru let him leave the court unharmed.

The quarrel between the Guru and his General Painsde Khan provided an opportunity to the Guru's enemies. The son of Chandu and the son of Prithia had always been waiting for such an opportunity. They made a common cause with Painsde Khan. They flattered him saying that it was only due to his strength, courage and generalship that the Guru had defeated the Mughal forces repeatedly.

They went to Agra with Painsde Khan. They prevailed upon the Emperor to give them sufficient troops. Painsde Khan asserted that he would destroy the might of the Guru.

Shah Jahan also wanted to erase the insult of the previous repulsions of his forces at the Guru's hand. The defeat of his forces in the previous expeditions against the Guru was rankling in his heart. He granted permission for an attack on the Guru. He ordered the Governors of Lahore and Jalandhar to help Painsde Khan in his fight against the Guru.

The combined forces of the Governors, the soldiers of Painsde Khan and Usman Khan and the Pathans of Bassi attacked Guru Har Gobind at Kartarpur. A fierce battle was fought. The Guru's

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Sikhs showed their valour. They killed many soldiers of the invading forces. The Guru himself, killed the Governors of Lahore and Jalandhar with his sword. Finding that his troops were being cut into pieces in large number, Painde Khan brought his horse near the Guru. He challenged him saying, "Let us have the duel for the fate of the battle. Why should there be so much loss of life on both sides?"

The Guru cheerfully accepted his challenge. He even allowed him to avail the chance of attacking him first. Painde Khan, thus, attacked the Guru with his javelin. The Guru defended the brunt on his shield. He gave him another chance. Painde Khan took his horse to some distance. He, then, came with a great speed and gave a very forceful blow of his javelin. But this time, too, the Guru was alert to escape the brunt. The blow of the javelin struck against the shield. The traitor Painde Khan grew nervous. The Guru had repulsed his two abortive attempts on his life. Painde Khan, then, suggested that both of them should alight from their respective horses and have a fight with swords. The Guru did not show any hitch. He agreed to the fight using swords. Both of the warriors alighted from their respective horses. The Guru asked Painde Khan to take first his turn of attacking him. Painde Khan did attack the Guru with his sword; but the Guru bore the brunt on the

shield. He then gave him another chance. This time Painde Khan used all his skill of swords-manship and gave a powerful stroke; but the Guru defended himself. He, then, asked Painde Khan to be ready to have the taste of his sword saying, "Not like you Painde Khan, see! This is the way how sword is used." There was no sign of anger in his eyes or on his face. He was as cool and calm as he used to be. He seemed to be giving a lesson in the skiful use of sword to Painde Khan.

Painde Khan could not defend himself. The Guru's sword pierced through his body. He fell down on the ground. His head armour fell down. The Guru went to him. He shielded his face against the sun. He said to Painde Khan, "You are parting for your onwards journey. Say your Kalma (Prayer)" Painde Khan slightly bowed and said, "Lord! Your sword is Kalma for me. I shall get a seat in heaven because of the stroke of your sword." The Guru felt pity for Painde Khan. He prayed to God to grant peace to his soul.



# **11. The Tender Hearted Guru**

Out of the five sons of Guru Har Gobind, Baba Atal, Baba Ani Rai and the eldest Baba Gurditta had predeceased him. Teg Bahadur and Suraj Mal were the surviving sons. Teg Bahadur was too much occupied in meditation and he loved seclusion, Suraj Mal was too much absorbed into wordly affairs. So, the choice for the Guruship did not fall on them.

Guru Har Gobind was greatly loved by his Sikhs. When he left for his heavenly abode in 1644, many a Sikhs felt that life without their favourite Guru, would be futile for them. They were so attached to him that a few of them were even keen to burn themselves with him on his funeral pyre. They were, however, dissuaded to do so. They were firmly told that Sikh teachings did not approve the rite of 'Sati'. But the Rajput Raja Ram Partap and his son, Ram Singh paid little heed. They jumped into the flames of the burning pyre of the Guru and burnt themselves alive.

Before his eternal depeature, Guru Har Gobind had chosen Har Rai to be his successor. Har Rai was the younger son of Baba Gurditta. His elder brother Dhir Mal was not considered suitable for

the holy seat of Guruship by his grandfather, Guru Har Gobind. He was busy conspiring against the Guru with the enemies. Guru Har Gobind seated Guru Har Rai on the holy throne. He placed five copper coins and a coconut before him. He bowed before him. Bhai Bhana Ji, who was the son of Bhai Buddha Ji put the mark of Guruship on his forehead. Har Rai was, thus, installed as the Seventh Guru of the Sikhs.

Guru Har Rai was a boy of fourteen, when he occupied the Gurugaddi. He had inherited military traditions from his grand father. He had a small army of 2200 Sikh soldiers with him.. He was strong in body like a soldier. He was a skilful rider, but he was peace loving and very tender at heart. So much so, that he could not even see the destrucion of a flower, what to speak of life.

He was the lover of nature. He liked appreciating the beauty of nature. He saw the image of God in all the beautiful things. One day, he was walking in his garden looking at the flowers and tender buds. His cloak came in contact with the flowers of a plant. The result was that many flowers dashed to the ground. He was so much moved at the plight of the flowers that tears welled down his eyes. Everafter it, he was careful lest his cloak should spoil the flowers. He would hold his cloak in his hands while walking in his garden.



He was tender hearted but steadfast. He was a skiful hunter. Though he was not very fond of hunting yet sometimes, he would go to the forest for pastime. There, he would never kill an animal. He was against any kind of cruelty shown to animals. He loved God and His creation. In the forest, he would catch the deer, patted them and kept them in his zoo. He took every care to see them cheerful and in good health.

Doing good to all, serving every one who needed service and showing love and behaving politely to one and all were the guiding principles of his life. He had malice towards none, not even for those who apposed him. His elder brother Dhir Mal was inimical, but he had a soft and kind heart for him also.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji had started the institution of Langar. The practice of free kitchen continued under the successive Gurus. Guru Har Rai improved its functioning to make it run more smoothly. Under the previous Gurus, food from the free kitchen was served to all, who visited it at fixed hours. But Guru Har Rai enjoined upon the Sikhs, who served in the kitchen, to keep the Langar open at all hours, Be it day, or night, morning, or evening, it should remain open.

He used to say, "God lives in every heart, if we injure a heart, we give pain to God. Please a heart,

and you will please God. So, always be polite and humane in your dealings." He used to sing, "Every human heart is a jewel worthy to be protected. Hurting a heart is a sin. If one desires to meet God, one should never hurt a man's heart." According to him a temple or a mosque could be rebuilt, but it was hard to keep intact a broken heart.

Whenever, the Masands or a group of Sikhs, came to have the pleasure of seeing him, he used to say, "Do you share your food with others? Do you run Langar at your places?" He advised them that it was the duty of a householder to lessen the pains of a man who knocked at his door. He should never disappoint a person who sought his help. He should never return a person empty handed from his door. He must, at least, satisfy his hunger. The Guru advised the Sikh visitors that they should always do good to others.

For the welfare of people and to lessen their sufferings, the Guru had run a free dispensary. There the sick, the invalid and the wounded were treated with utmost care and tenderness. His store house contained all kinds of life saving medicines.. Even very rare and most costly medicines were found in his store house. He served the people. To him the service of man was the service of God; because God resides in every heart."

Guru Har Rai was endowed with a peace loving

nature. He liked the solitude of the hills. He spent his time in quiet meditation. The excitement of chase was limited to catching the deer and other animals for their breeding. He took every care to see them cheerful and healthy. The din of war was against his disposition. He had his army, but he was compelled by circumstances to use it mildly only once. He was following the policy of avoiding war and took special care to escape from bloodshed. He spent most of his time in the solitude of the hills.

But he also made extensive tours of the Malwa region of the Punjab. He preached the doctrines of the Sikh religion. Many more people became his followers. Leaving Kiratpur, he visited Kartarpur, Nurmehal and then Bhai Rupa and Mehraj in the Malwa region.

At Mehraj Chaudhary Kala became his Sikh. He brought his nephews Phul and Sundri with him. They were orphans and Chaudhary Kala was supporting them. Phul and Sundri knelt before the Guru. They, then began to beat their bellies. When the Guru inquired of such beating of ballies, Kala folded his hands and implored, "True King! They are hungry, they need something to satisfy their hunger. At that, the Guru blessed them. Chaudhary Phool became his Sikh. He was blessed with the boon that his offspring would become rulers.

They would have their sway up to the river Yamuna. The grant of this boon proved true. The offspring of Phool became the rulers of Patiala, Nabha and Jind. They had come beating their hungry belies, but were blessed with kingdoms. Kala's wife was angry with him saying that he should have got a boon for his own sons. So, the next day Kala took his sons to the Guru's presence. The Guru said, "You have brought them with rehearsed lessons. Still God willing, their offspring would not face any thing in want."

Many elders of some other families, who later rose to eminence, were blessed by Guru Har Rai. The Bhai family of Kaithal and the Bhai family of Bagarian can be mentioned here. These two families preached the teachings of the Sikhs religion in the territory lying between the river Sutlaj and the River Yamuna.

Though himself very peace loving, the preaching of the Sikh doctrine received impetus during his Guruship. He sent preachers to different and far off places. Bhagat Bhagwan was a recluse. He was a saint who had since long detached himself from the world. He was leading a pious life of a sanyasi. He became his Sikh. He was so much impressed by the Sikh teachings that he became a preacher to preach the Sikh religion in the East.

Bhai Pheru another pious Sikh was made a

Masand to preach the religion in the upper Bari Doab region of the Punjab. Gonda another devout Sikh was sent to Kabul to preach the Sikh Dharma. Kabul had as it is today predominant Muslim population. But Gonda had faith in the Guru and God. He was successful in establishing a Dharamshala there. He also converted many people into the Sikh faith. Thus, during Guru Har Rai's Guruship, Sikhism crossed the boundaries of India.

## **12. Guru Har Rai and Dara Shikoh.**

Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan had four sons. They were Dara Shikoh, Shujah, Aurangzeb and Murad. Dara Shikoh was the eldest. Shah Jahan was very fond of him. He loved him dearly. Once he fell seriously ill. Shah Jahan was very upset. He summoned the royal physician. He was asked to cure the prince of his illness. He practised various medicines one after another, but there was no improvement. His condition worsened after every new treatment.

The Emperor called his nobles to suggest the means to get the prince cured of his disease. At their suggestion, many able doctors were called from all over the Empire. They examined the prince and prescribed their treatment; but they all failed to arrest the ailment. The royal physician said that he could cure the prince if a certain medicine in a certain quantity was administered to him. He was sorry that the rare medicine was not in the royal store house.

The Emperor was grief stricken. He was at a loss to know, where he could get the medicine. The condition of the prince was growing from bad to worse.

Seeing the Emperor in a dejected mood, the

Prime Minister said "I hope we can get the proper medicine from the store house of Guru Har Rai. I request you to send a special ambassador to his Darbar to get the medicine."

Emperor Shah Jahan first hesitated to contact the Guru. He knew that his father Jahangir had tortured Guru Arjan Dev, the great grand father of Guru Har Rai. He had his strained relations with Guru Har Gobind. He had sent a number of expeditions against him. He had filled up the sacred Baoli Sahib of the Sikhs at Lahore. He had also built a mosque at the site of the Sikh free kitchen at Lahore. So, he told the Prime Minister that he felt the Guru would not help him in his hour of distress.

At this the Prime Minister said that he had gathered the information about the saintly conduct of the Guru. The Guru was ever ready to help those who were in distress. His love and service were alike for all, friends or foes. He would surely do good to them. To nurse the sick and to provide a healing touch to every heart was his object. He says, "If one yearns to meet God, one should never injure a heart."

So, the Emperor sent a special ambassador to bring the particular medicine from the Guru.

The Guru was ever pleased to nurse the sick. He gave the medicine to the ambassador and told him how to administer it to the patient. Cheerful at

heart, the ambassador hastened to the Royal court.

It was the wonder drug. The very first dose showed its effect. The prince was fully cured within a few days. Naturally he was very thankful to Guru Har Rai.

Prince Dara was a cultured man. He was liberal minded. He had regards for Sufi saints. He had the knowledge of the books of the Hindu religion. He was attracted towards the teachings of the Sikh Gurus. He had a special liking for Guru Har Rai, because the medicine sent by him had cured him of his disease. Thus, he cultivated friendship with Guru Har Rai. In fact, he had an apparent leaning towards Sikhism.

In 1656, Shah Jahan fell ill. The news of his illness aroused the ambition in his sons to capture the throne of India. Every one of the four sons, wanted to become the Emperor. So, the war of succession started among the princes. Aurangzeb was the cleverest of all. He defeated Dara Shikoh in the battle of Samugarh. He imprisoned his father, Shah Jahan. He deceitfully despatched his brother Murad to death. Shujah left the country to save his skin and died in wilderness. Aurangzeb eliminated all those, who could have claim for the throne.

After his defeat, Dara ran towards Punjab. He was hotly pursued by Aurangzeb's forces. His life



was in danger. He had with him only a few faithful soldiers. He was in great distress. He reached Goindwal. He told the Guru that Aurangzeb's forces had been chasing him. They would not allow him to cross the river and reach Lahore. He requested the Guru to halt the advancing army of Aurangzeb for sometime. It would enable him to cross the river Beas for Lahore. At Lahore, he was expecting to get some military help.

Dara had approached the Guru. He was in distress. Moreover, he had always been friendly towards the Guru. The house of Guru was a place of refuge for the innocents. Notwithstanding the impending danger, the Guru decided to manage a safe passage for Dara Shikoh to cross the river, Beas.

Guru Har Rai was peace loving. He had never used his army against any one. Din of war and bloodshed were against his disposition. But he had inherited the saint-soldier spirit of his grandfather. How could he avoid risking his life when situation demanded it? As a peculiar situation had developed, so he had to send his army. But the task assigned to the army was mild in nature and limited in scope. The Guru's soldiers were just to delay the advancement of Aurangzeb's forces. They should avoid armed clashes as far as possible.

When the forces of Aurangzeb saw that there

was the assemblage of the Sikh soldiers on the bank of the river, they halted their march. They needed some time for making plans for the ensuing battle. In the meantime, Dara Shikoh and his men were able to cross the river safely. After providing safe passage to Dara Shikoh, the Guru's army left the scene.

A detachment of Sikh soldiers had kept the Aurangzeb's forces away only for two days. There was no clash of arms because the Mughal forces did not venture to march towards the river Beas without proper strategy.

Their passage was clear, they marched off towards Lahore. Dara Shikoh failed to muster troops in his support at Lahore. He then fled towards Sind as a fugitive. There he was arrested and after bearing many insults and tortures, he was killed on the orders of Aurangzeb.



# **13. Ram Rai at Aurangzeb's Court**

Aurangzeb imprisoned his father Shah Jahan in the Fort of Agra. He killed Dara Shikoh condemning him as an infidel (Kafir). He treacherously did away with his brother Murad. He forced Shujah to flee for his life and he died unsung. He cleared every hurdle, eliminated every aspirant to the throne and made it smooth for himself to ascend the Mughal throne of India.

Unlike Dara Shikoh, Aurangzeb was a bigot. He wanted to make India a land only for the Muslims. But the fact was quite the opposite; because more than 80% of the population was Hindu. He was zealous to convert the Hindus and bring them to the Muslim fold. He was not in favour of allowing the construction of new temples and opening of new schools for the infidels. He was against the Sikh Gurus because they were respected even by the Muslims. They had their following among the Muslims too. The teachings of the Sikh Gurus were not confined to any single faith; but those were for all people. Thus, the Sikh Gurus stood in his way of promoting only the Muslim religion in India.

Bigot as Aurangzeb was, he was not a man to forget and forgive. It was quite fresh in his mind

that a detachment of the Guru's army had been a source to secure a safe passage for Dara Shikoh at Beas. He was aware that his forces were made to halt for two days at the passage of river Beas by the Guru's men. So as soon as he established himself on the throne, he summoned Guru Har Rai to his presence.

Guru Har Rai knew that Aurangzeb was a fanatic. In addition to political matters, he would question the religious beliefs of the Sikhs. He did not honour the royal summons in person. However, he decided to send his eldest son Ram Rai to present himself at Aurangzeb's court. But before despatching him for the royal presence, Guru Har Rai told him in no uncertain terms that courage and uprightness must never be deserted under any tried circumstances. He reminded him that Jahangir had wanted Guru Arjun Dev to change certain passage from the Granth Sahib, but he did not yield. The Gurubani was the wise words of God, not to be altered under any situation. To follow the Sikh way was to tread on a double edged dagger. Steadfastness and unshaken belief in God were the armour of a true Sikh.

Ram Rai promised not to do anything against the Sikh tenents. Guru Har Rai again reminded his son, Ram Rai, that Guru Arjan endured the cruel wrath of Jahangir with exemplary fortitude. Guru

Har Gobind bore imprisonment and then faced battles thrust upon him by the rulers. But the rulers failed to deter them from their truthful conviction. One, who followed the path of Nanak came with his head placed on his palm, so that he should always be ready to sacrifice his life for truth and the love of God.

Ram Rai reached Delhi to explain what Emperor Aurangzeb wanted from Guru Har Rai. He was received well and treated kindly by the Emperor. Aurangzeb asked Ram Rai why the Sikh troops had contested against his troops at the passage of the river Beas. Why they had prevented his troops from crossing the river until Dara had reached a place of safety. Ram Rai replied that the house of Guru recognised no foe. There was love and kindness for all. The Guru's Sikhs did not clash their arms with his troops. They did not support the cause of Dara. They had only saved a life and saving life and not taking it had been the ideal of the Guru. As the Sikh troops had not entered into any armed skirmish with the Mughal forces; Aurangzeb did not lay much emphasis on that political aspect.

He was much more offended because of the popularity of Sikh religion. He raised question after question about the Sikh faith. Ram Rai was a quick witted person. He tried to convince the Emperor that the Sikh faith bore secular character. Its teachings had the universal appeal. Besides the

Gurubani of the Sikh Gurus, they had the perfect reverence for the writings of the Hindus and the Muslim saints. Those sacred writings were the part of the volume, the Granth Sahib.

For Aurangzeb that was an offence. He was bent upon seeing India only the land of the faithful, the Muslims. He had even punished the Muslim Sufi saints because they did not abhor other faiths.

He then asked Ram Rai, "In your holy book, Guru Nanak says that the dust of the Muslim's body is made into potter's clay. He (The potter) manufactures bricks and pots from this clay. He then puts the bricks and the pots in the fire to bake them. Thus, the dust of a Muslim raises cries in agony being burnt in fire."

The Muslims do not burn their dead. They bury them. They think it a cursed action to burn the dead body, fearing that it was cruel and full of agony for the dead. To this day death from burns is considered un auspicious by the Muslims.

Guru Nanak tried to educate people that despite all efforts to keep the body of a Muslim away from fire it had to bear the agony of fire. The body turned itself into dust (clay) after the passage of time. Then, it reached the hands of potter to be moulded into bricks and pots.

Aurangzeb asked Ram Rai why there was the mention of the body of Musalman. Caring more for

the Emperor's pleasure than for the explanation of the absolute truth, Ram Rai answered, "No, my Lord! It is the mistake of the scribe. The word really means is Beiman or an infidel. It is not Musalman." This explanation of Ram Rai, no wonder, pleased the Emperor. Aurangzeb found him intelligent, diplomatic and a good repartee. He also needed his services to ensure the peace in the Punjab. So, he treated him kindly. Ram Rai was able to win the favour of Aurangzeb. The latter gave him a jagir in the Doon Valley.

But the cleverness of Ram Rai proved suicidal for him. He succeeded in purchasing his security and securing a position in the royal court; but he lost the favour of the true king, Guru Har Rai. Guru Har Rai heard that Ram Rai had proved to be a coward. He had not exhibited courage to stand by the truth. He was guilty of showing affront to the Gurbani by altering the word Musalman to Beiman. He came to know that he had purchased his safety and favour of the Emperor at the cost of truth and courage. The tender hearted Guru was deeply hurt. He remarked that Ram Rai was not worthy of inheriting the Gurugaddi. He proclaimed that henceforth, Ram Rai should never see the face of the Guru. He also made it known to most of his Sikhs that after him, Har Krishan would occupy the holy seat of the Gurugaddi.

## **14. Ram Rai's Futile Attempts for Gurugaddi.**

Ram Rai had been staying in Delhi. He was clever and intelligent. He had developed relations with the nobles at the royal court. He was successful in cementing rapport with the Emperor. But inspite of his qualities as a good courtier and diplomat, he had become a base coin for the Guru and the Sikh Sangat at large. The manifestation of his clever but cowardly conduct at the royal court was not in tune with the Sikh character and particularly of a person, who was to occupy the holy seat of the Guru. The affront to the Gurbani was an unpardonable offence. The alteration of the word of Gurubani from Musalman to Beiman sealed his fate for ever. He failed in his test. He was overawed by the splendour and the might of the Mughal court. No doubt, he raised his status in the eyes of the Emperor. He pleased the Emperor. The latter conferred on him royal gifts but for Guru Har Rai he was unworthy, who had brought a slur against the glorious traditions of courage and sacrifice.

The news reached Ram Rai that he had been debared from inheriting the Gurugaddi. He also came to know of the injunction of Guru Har Rai that he had been deprived of the honour to have



even the glimpse of the Guru.

But the displeasure of the Guru and his injunction not to have his sight did not dishearten Ram Rai. He was confident that he would get the Gurugaddi. Royal influence, he thought, would be his assets. He was sure that the Emperor would favour his claim for the Gurugaddi. He thought that it would be in the interests of the state to see an ally occupying the Gurugaddi in the Punjab.

Ram Rai was a resourceful person. He utilised the government influence to win over some Masands to his side. He, even, purchased certain greedy and corrupt Masands by the force of money. But falsehood had no feet to stand upon. The Sikh Sangat in general refused to contribute the tithes to those unscrupulous Masands. It refused to recognise Ram Rai as the rightful heir.

Ram Rai did visit Kiratpur. He tried his level best to set things right. He made common cause with Dhirmal. Both exerted joint efforts to influence the Masands and receive the offerings. But their efforts bore little fruit. The Sikhs knew that their Guru, the true King, was the only authority to pass the Gurugaddi to any one, he thought worthy of it.

Having failed in influencing the Masands, the Sikh Sangat and seeing that the much sought help of Dhirmal would not cut much ice, he decided to take his case to the court of the Emperor.

Ram Rai appealed to the Emperor for his justice

praying, " I am the eldest son of Guru Har Rai. According to the established rules, the eldest son inherits the property of his father. Moreover, my brother Har Krishan is just a child of five years, how can he shoulder the responsibilities of the Guru?. The whole work of my ancestors would go to wreck and ruin under the pontification of Har Krishan".

Aurangzeb, the Emperor, though a bigot, as far as religion was concerned, was wise and just when parties involved were not Muslims. He was told that the Gurugaddi was not a sort of property. It was the holiest seat to be occupied by the worthiest of the worthies.

He was informed that it was not essential for the Guru to pass the Gurugaddi only to his sons. Guru Nanak gave it to his worthiest Sikh Bhai Lehna. The Second Guru passed it to his devout and saintly old Sikh, Amar Dass and so on. There were no hard and fast rules to be followed to install the Gurus. So, Aurangzeb rejected the claim of Ram Rai to the Gurugaddi.

# **15. Guru Har Krishan**

## **Invited to Delhi.**

Guru Har Krishan was the youngest son of Guru Har Rai. He was born on July 7, 1656 at Kiratpur. His elder brother Ram Rai fell from the grace of his father due to his deplorable misdoings at the court of Aurangzeb. The tender hearted Guru Har Rai was so much enraged and hurt that he declared him (Ram Rai) unfit for the Guruship. He also forbade him showing his cursed face to the Guru. Guru Har Rai passed away in 1661. Guru Har Krishan had been made the Eighth Guru by his father, Har Rai before his death. He was just a child of five year, but Guru Har Rai found in him all the capabilities and spiritual characteristics essential for the holy office of Guruship.

Guru Har Krishan began to carry out his duties very well. The holy light of Guru Nanak manifested itself in him. He could address the Sikh congregation. He could perform all the relevant duties associated with the holy office.

But Ram Rai did not honour the decision of his father. He refused to accept Guru Har Krishan as the Guru. He had failed in his previous endeavours to get the Gurugaddi, but he had not been disheartened. He continued his efforts.

He was successful in winning the confidence of some of the nobles at the royal court. With their support, he made another representation to the Emperor to do justice to him in getting the Gurugaddi. So, Aurangzab decided to hear Guru Har Krishan, the occupant of the Gurugaddi also.

Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Amber was one of his trusted councillors. He consulted him. The Raja had great respect and regards for the Sikh Gurus. He suggested that he would request the Guru to visit Delhi. He hoped that the child Guru would accept his invitation. He would visit Delhi and the occasion would provide His Royal Majesty with the chance to see and question the child Guru. The suggestion of Jai Singh pleased the Emperor. He authorised him to invite the child Guru to Delhi.

The Sikhs of Delhi came to know of the invitation extended to Guru Har Krishan. They were glad to know that they would have the good luck to get the sacred glimpse of their Guru. They were very keen to see their Guru. They requested Raja Jai Singh to tell the Guru that the Sangat of Delhi would be delighted to see the Guru among them. They collected a good number of presents to be made over to the Guru.

Ram Rai was also happy. He was hoping to realise his dream of becoming the Guru, thinking that the Emperor would justify his claim to the

Gurugaddi. Ram Rai knew that Guru Har Rai had enjoined upon Har Krishan not to see the face of the Emperor. If he refused to honour the summons, the Imperial army would attack him. On the other hand, if he disobeyed his father's injunction, he would lose the respect of the Sikhs. He thought that the game was in his favour. He would be able to exploit the situation to his advantage. He would make the Sikhs against him (Guru Har Krishan).

Raja Jai Singh sent his men to Kiratpur along with elephants, horses and carts laden with many presents for the Guru. The child Guru was sounded about the invitation of the Emperor. He bluntly refused to visit the royal court. He was then told that the invitation was from Raja Jai Singh. He was also told that the Sangat of Delhi was very desirous of seeing him.

The child Guru then agreed to go to Delhi. He said to his mother and the anxious Sikhs, "Dispel all fears or doubts from your heart. It is the will of God that will prevail. We must honour what pleases Him."

Then there was a meeting of the senior Sikhs and the Guru's mother, Mata Sulakhni. After thinking over the matter for sometime, finally it was decided that the Guru should visit Delhi only as the guest of Raja Jai Singh. He would meet the Sikh Sangat at Delhi. He would not visit the royal

court nor would he see Emperor Aurangzeb.

Raja Jai Singh's men agreed to the conditions. They assured that the Guru would stay at the bungalow of Raja Jai Singh as his guest. He would not be forced to present himself in the royal court. Thus, it was decided that the Guru along with his mother and a few Sikhs would go to Delhi the next day.



## **16. Humbled Pandit Krishan Chand**

Guru Har Krishan accepted the invitation of Raja Jai Singh. He left Kiratpur for Delhi. A large crowd of Sikh Sangat accompanied the Guru on his journey to Delhi. The Guru's mother, and some other reverend ladies were also to accompany the procession.

The Guru broke his journey at many places on the way. At every halt, he advised people to lead an honest, simple and truthful life, keep faith in God, repeat His name, share the pains and sufferings of their fellow brethren, to do good and always keep God in mind. People listened to his words of wisdom with devotion.

By and by, the caravan reached a village named Pajokhara, near Ambala. There arrangements were made for the halt of the Guru's entourage. Tents were pitched up. The camp of the Guru presented the look of a royal resting place.

There was a learned Brahman named Krishan, who lived in the village. He saw the pomp and show of the camp. The seed of doubt sprouted in his mind. He wanted to test if the child Guru was gifted with spiritual powers. He saw the Sikhs devotionally serving the child Guru. He said to one of the Sikhs, "You hold your Guru in so great an

esteem.

His name is Har Krishan. Seeing your faith in him, one can think that he is 'Avatar' like Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna had given us the teachings contained in the sacred book Bhagvad Gita. I think, your child Guru Sri Har Krishan will not be able to know even the meanings of thoughts contained in the sacred book. If he is a true Guru, let him discuss the Gita and the thoughts contained in the book with me".

The Sikh came to the camp of the Guru. He related to the Guru what the Brahman had said. He also told the Guru that the tone of the Brahman was derogatory towards the Guru and he was arrogant. The Guru heard all that the Sikh had said. He did not lose his calm. He smiled and told the Sikh to bring the Brahman respectfully in his presence. The Sikh went out. He came back accompanied by the Brahman.

The Brahman did not show any respect to the Guru. He took his seat and said, "I have come to discuss the philosophy of Gita with you. I doubt, whether you know the meanings of the thoughts contained in the Gita".

The Guru said, "Pundit Jee, please go and bring any man you think to be totally ignorant and illiterate from the village. By the grace of God, he will discuss the Gita with you".

The Brahman thought that it was a plausible



excuse put forth by the Guru. As he wanted to test the spiritual powers of the Guru, he left for the village to bring an unlettered and idiotic man.

The Brahman came across a simple man. His name was Chhajju. He belonged to a low caste of water carrier and had never been to any school. For him a black word was like the figure of a buffaloe. Krishan, the Brahman, brought Chhajju Jhiwar with him. The Guru touched the edge of his stick with the head of Chhajju and then asked the Brahman. "Chhajju has now become a more learned scholar than you. You will see, how much powers the house of Guru Nanak possesses. Chhajju will discuss even the minutest details with you about Bhagwad Gita".

Krishan, the Brahman and Chhajju, already blessed by the touch of the Guru, discussed the philosophy of Srimad Bhagwad Gita. Chhajju explained everything to the satisfaction of the learned Brahman. The discourse lasted for an hour or so. Finally, the Brahman submitted. He accepted his defeat. The light of knowledge shown by Chhajju dazzled the Brahman. He was totally convinced that Guru Har Krishan was the true Guru blessed with spiritual powers. He bowed his head before the Guru. He felt remorse for his disrespect shown to the Guru. He begged his pardon. He became his Sikh.

The Guru advised him, "Do not feel proud of your

learning. Humility, not pride, should become part of your character. Earn your bread by honest means. Share your earnings with the needy. Always remember God and service to His men should be your ideal for your future life".

After reforming Krishan, the Brahman, the Guru marched onwards to Delhi. At Panjokhra the Guru asked the Sikh Sangat to go back to their villages and Kiratpur. He urged upon them to obey him injunction. Very few Sikhs and the ladies including Guru's mother went along with him to Delhi. To commemorate the visit of the Guru to Panjokhra, a Gurdwara stands there as witness to it.

# **17. Guru Har Krishan at Delhi**

A very limited number of Sikhs and reverend ladies of the Guru's household reached Delhi along with the child Guru. Raja Jai Singh in all humility, went ahead to receive the Guru. He was very courteous and showed due respect to the Guru. He brought the Guru to his bungalow. He managed to see that the Guru was provided with every comfort. The palace where the Guru stayed in Delhi, has now been converted into a very magnificent building of Gurdwara Bangla Shaib.

Raja Jai Singh was in a fix. Aurangzeb was exerting pressure upon him to present the Guru in his court. On the other hand, the Guru had acceded to the invitation of Raja Jai Singh on the condition that he would be his guest. He (the Raja) could not displease the Emperor, he could not back out of his promise to the Guru.

One day, he requested the Guru to accompany him to the royal court. He said, "The Emperor is desirous of hearing you before deciding the case for the Gurgaddi. As Ram Rai has been pushing forward his claims, I shall be there to defend you."

Guru Har Krishan said, "Raja Sahib! You know that my father had forewarned me not to see the Emperor. You know. I cannot go against his injunc-

tion, may it costs me my life." Raja Jai Singh found that it was futile on his part to persuade the Guru to visit the royal court.

He thought, it would be wiser to request the Emperor to send one of his sons to hear the Guru and then convey the summary of his arguments to the Emperor. He explained the impediment of the Guru's visit to the royal court in such a way that the Emperor agreed to hear the Guru through one of his sons.

Consequently, the Emperor sent prince Mauzam to the bungalow of Raja Jai Singh. Guru Har Krishan cited examples of the previous Gurus. He told the prince that Gurugaddi was not a Jagir or property to be inherited. His great grandfather Guru Har Gobind had two living sons but he conferred the Gurugaddi on his younger grandson Har Rai. Similarly, his father had ignored the claims of his elder brother Ram Rai and bestowed it to him. He further told the prince that it was the prerogative of the Guru to bestow it even to a Sikh. The first three Gurus had passed the Gurugaddi to their Sikhs, whom they thought worthy of the holy office. They had their sons, but they thought that they fell short of the requisite qualifications for the holy office. So none, but the Guru had the powers to appoint his successor.

The Prince was fully convinced that the claim of Ram Rai to the Gurugaddi was unjust. He

sounded the Emperor about the arguments put forward by Guru Har Krishan. He, himself, pleaded that the claim of Ram Rai lacked justification and that the deceased Guru had put his seal in favour of Har Krishan and it was beyond any alteration.

The Emperor decided that the claim of Ram Rai for the Gurugaddi was false. So, he rejected his claim and his case was dismissed.

## **18. Guru Har Krishan Discovered the Head Queen**

Emperor Aurangzeb had by then admitted that Guru Har Krishan was the rightful heir to the Gurugaddi. He was curious to know if the child Guru possessed spiritual powers. He had heard that the house of Guru Nanak was endowed with the grace of God. Being suspicious by nature, he wanted to put the Guru into certain tests and thereby find out the truth. He also wanted to know how intelligent the child Guru was.

The Guru had been staying in the bungalow of Raja Jai Singh. That palace was exclusively at the disposal of the Guru and his company. Raja Jai Singh and his queens lived at some other palace.

One day, Aurangzeb spoke his mind to the Raja regarding testing the spiritual powers of the Guru. He suggested to the Raja to give a simple test to the Guru and report the result to him. He revealed his scheme saying, "Your queens, queens of other Rajput nobles, and wives of other notable Hindus along with their maid-servants should assemble at your palace. Some maid-servants should put on fine dress like queens and some of the queens should dress themselves as maid-servants. The

Guru be called and asked to recognise your head queen among the assembled crowd of the ladies. If he succeeded in recognising your head queen, we shall admit that he possesses spiritual powers."

Raja Jai Singh could not enrage the Emperor. He agreed to the suggestion and promised to report the revealed result to him.

The queens and maid servants gathered in a big hall. Some were decently dressed, while some others were putting on simple clothes. Raja Jai Singh took the child Guru with him. They reached the palace room where the queen mother (head queen) and other ladies and maid-servants were sitting and talking to one another.

Raja Jai Singh asked Guru Har Krishan. "I shall be pleased if you recognise my head queen among these good women. You should apply your intelligence and find out the head queen".

Guru Har Krishan found himself surrounded on all sides by the ladies, most of them were equally well dressed.

Guru Har Krishan was holding a stick. He used to keep it as an insignia of religious authority. He touched the first lady with his stick and said, "No, she is not the head queen," Again he touched another lady with the stick and said, "She is also not the head queen". Then he proceeded on and sat in the lap of a lady, who was not very decently

dressed and said, " She is the head queen. She is the queen mother."

Although the head queen was dressed in a maid servant's attire, he recognised her. The head queen and the Raja were happy. They presented the Guru with gifts and sought his blessings.

Raja Jai Singh informed the Emperor that the Guru was successful in recognising the head queen. He added that he was fully convinced that his choice for the Guruship was really right.



## **19. Nursing the Sick**

The mission of Sikh Gurus was not only confined to meet the spiritual needs of the people, it had a far larger objective. The institution of Langar had been providing food to the needy irrespective of any distinction. But from the times of Guru Arjan Dev nursing the sick had become a new addition in their services for the welfare of the people. The lepers found Guru Arjan their benefactor, who treated them kindly and had built a colony (pingalwara) for their settlement. While coming back from his visit of Kashmir in 1618, Guru Har Gobind found the people of Lahore in the grip of plague. The Guru nursed the sick and succeeded in arresting the intensity of the disease. In 1648, Punjab was engulfed by the severe famine and the sickness associated with hunger. The tender hearted Guru Har Rai set up Langars at various places. He liberally supplied medicines from his store house for the sick. His sustained and compassionate efforts bore fruit. Their hard time passed and the people were grateful to Guru Har Rai.

During the stay of Guru Har Krishan at Delhi, the people were struck by the epidemic of Cholera. Daily scores of people began to die of the fatal disease. Following the traditions of his forefathers,

the child Guru thoroughly dedicated himself to mitigate the pains of the people.

The suffering people of Delhi visited him in large numbers. The Guru prayed for every visitor. He then gave them water touched with his hand and toe in a jug. He advised them to mix that water with some more water and administer it to the Cholera patients. He assured them that with the grace of Guru Nanak, the patient would be cured. People did as they were instructed by the Guru. The touch of Guru's hand and toe to the jug of water and his prayers had the miraculous effect. Whosoever used the water given by the Guru, was fully cured of the disease. Thus, he was able to save many lives.

The grateful people began singing praises of the Guru. The dedication and the sympathy of the Guru for the cause of the sick made him very popular. The people of Delhi wanted to keep the Guru stay at Delhi for a long time, but God's will was not in consonance with their willingness.

The call of God came for Guru Har Krishan. He had an attack of small pox. Fearing that the end was approaching, the Sikhs wanted to know who the next Sikh Guru would be. Reading their minds Guru Har Krishan, through his gestures, asked the Sikhs to bring five paisas and a coconut. He touched them. He, then, raised his hand and

waved it thrice in the air and uttered the word Baba Bakale. Saying these words the pious soul left the body to honour the call of God. He died on March 30, 1664, when he was only a child of nine. His body was cremated on the banks of the river Yamuna. Gurudwara Bala Sahib now stands there in his memory.

## 20. Makhan Shah Found the True Guru.

Makhan Shah discovers the Guru.



Guru Har Krishan passed away on March 30, 1664 in Delhi. Before his death, when the Sikhs asked him who the next Guru would be, he uttered the words Baba Bakale.

From the last words of Guru Har Krishan, it was clear that the next Guru was at the village of Bakala. Baba Gurditta, the grandson of Baba Budda and some other wise Sikhs knew that Guru Har Krishan had his indication towards Guru Teg Bahadur, who was his Baba (grand parent) and lived in the village of Bakala. So they installed Guru Teg Bahadur as the real Guru. But the Sikhs in general were still confused.

The unscrupulous and greedy scions of the Guru's family wanted to benefit from the confused situation. Dhirmal was restless to capture the Gurugaddi. Not one Dhirmal, but as many as twenty two Sodhi aspirants of the Gurugaddi had shifted to Bakala in the hope to become the Guru. Every one of them installed himself on the seat and proclaimed that he was the real Guru.

The Sikhs came to visit their Guru with tithes and presents, but they were disappointed to see the band of deceits ever ready to befool them. They came to drink deeply from the spiritual foun-

tain, but instead of finding soothing peace for their thirsty souls, they found greed and confusion reigning there. The Masands and the so called Gurus were interested to get as much as they could from the visiting Sikhs. Such an attitude of the so called Gurus and the Masands was sure to make the Sikhs lose their faith in their Guru.

Makhan Shah was a rich merchant. He was entrusted with the supply of rations and other requirements to the Mughal army. His ships laden with merchandise sailed in the Arabian sea. He had his trade relations even with other countries neighbouring Indian shores. He kept a good number of armed men with him. He had teams of servants to help him in his enterprising business.

Makhan Shah was a devout Sikh. He had an unshakable faith in the Sikh Gurus. He was a pious Sikh, practising the principles laid down by the Gurus. He recited the Gurbani with perfect devotion. He was particular in sending the tithes (1/10 of the income) to the Guru for Langar and other welfare projects, carried on by the Gurus. He kept himself aware of the Gurus, their place of abode and their activities for the good of mankind.

Once his ship, laden with merchandise, was sailing in the sea near the harbour of Surat. It was drifted away by a severe storm into the sea. The more the sailors tried to bring it near the harbour, the more it was pushed away by the strong cur-

rents. Makhan Shah feared that the ship would sink along with the cargo and he had to suffer heavy losses. He sat down. He fixed his mind on God. He recited Japji Sahib. He, then, prayed to the Guru occupying the Gurugaddi of Guru Nanak to save him from the impending ruin. He promised to contribute the 1/10 of the income to the Guru, if the cargo reached safely to the shore for sale.

His prayer was heard. The storm passed away. The sea became calm. The sailors were able to anchor the ship into the harbour.

Makhan Shah sold his merchandise and made a good profit. The promised 1/10 of the income amounted to five hundred gold coins. Makhan Shah was very anxious to contribute that amount to the Guru as soon as it was possible.

He had the information that the Guru had been staying at Delhi. So first of all, he hastened to Delhi. There, he heard that the new Guru was at Bakala.

He was told that Guru Har Krishan had passed away and that the light of Ninth Nanak could be found at Bakala.

Makhan Shah had his wife and sons with him. He had his retinue in hundreds. He had his elephants and arm guards. With all that paraphernalia, Makhan Shah set out for Bakala. Reaching there he encamped outside the village. The Sodhis heard that a rich merchant had arrived in the

village. He would offer costly presents to the Guru. So a race started among the aspirant Gurus to influence him. Every one of them wanted to contact him first. They all sent their Masands to his camp. Makhan Shah heard all of them one by one. Dhirmal's Masand argued that the Gurugaddi would remain in Dhirmals's family, because he was the grandson of Guru HarGobind. He tried to impress Makhan Shah saying, "As the Granth Sahib is in his possession, so he and only he is the real Guru."

Makhan Shah was a very experienced and wise person. He said to himself, "The Guru bestows gifts. He despises greed. He is a magnate holding the highest position and utmost regards among his Sikhs. His personal character is like a magnet that attracts Sikhs to him. But these people are after money. They send their men to receive the offerings lest they should fall into the hands of others. What kind of persons these men are! Their personal conduct does not give any sign of sublimity. I am at a loss to find the rightful heir to the throne of Guru Nanak". Then an idea struck his mind. He decided to offer five gold coins to every one of the twenty two aspirants of the Gurugaddi. He thought that the real Guru would ask for the full tithe. That way he would discover the real Guru.

The next day, Makhan Shah recited Japji Sahib, said his prayers and came out of his camp. First,

he visited Dhirmal. The latter received him warmly. He presented a khilat (dress) to him. He told Makhan Shah that the Granth Sahib was with him and he was the real Guru. Makhan Shah made an offering of five gold coins and came out of his Darbar.

He made the offerings of five gold coin to each of the twenty two so called Sodhi Gurus. No one asked him about the full amount of the tithe.

Makhan Shah became sad. He had firm faith in the last words of the Eighth Guru. He was certain that the Guru must be in the village of Bakala. So, he continued his search for the true Guru.

He met all the Sodhis one after another and asked if there was any other Sodhi living in Bakala. He was told that Teg Bahadur lived with his mother and wife in a house. But he was a recluse. He spent most of his time in seclusion and deep meditation. He had been living there since long. The other Sodhis had come there only recently after the heavenly departure of Guru Har Krishan. Makhan Shah decided to try him also.

Makhan Shah, then, proceeded to the residence of Guru Teg Bahadur along with his men and many more Sikhs; who too, were very anxious to find out the true Guru. Guru Teg Bahadur was in his room absorbed in his divine thoughts. The Guru's mother Mata Nanaki informed him that a crowd of Sikhs wanted to see him.



Guru Teg Bahadur sent a Sikh to tell the crowd that they should make no noise. They should visit the Guru bearing reverence and respect in their minds. Makhan Shah, then, made them stay outside. He alone went into the room. He knelt before the Guru. He placed five gold coins before him. He was about to leave when the Guru said, "O Sikh! You have covered a long journey to present the tithe personally. Why are you hesitant to offer the full amount of five hundred gold coins now? Your prayer to save your ship from wrecking was heard. Your cargo was safely brought to the shores and now you are backing out of your promised amount of tithe."

Hearing the words of the Guru, Makhan Shah's joy knew no bounds. He said to the Guru, "True King, if you continue to conceal the identity of yours, who will then guide the Sikhs? The base and greedy men will spoil the good work of generations of our Gurus. Leave this life of seclusion, come out and guide the Sikhs who are now without their spiritual Guide. You have saved me. You should save the Sikhs."

Makhan Shah made the offering of five hundred gold coins. He was very excited and happy. He was eager to break the news that he had found the real Guru.

But the Guru restrained him saying, "who-so-ever reveals my identity must first blacken his

face." Makhan Shah could not disobey the Guru's order. He resolved to reveal the identity of the true Guru. He was ready to blacken his face, thus satisfying the condition put-forth by the Guru.

He came back to his camp. During the night, he got a dress prepared for the Guru. Next day, early in the morning, he came along with his men and some Sikhs. He first went to the kitchen. He blackened his face with the ash. He, then, paid his obeisance to the Guru. He presented the dress to the Guru. He, then, climbed a top of the house and shouted. "Congratulations Sikh brethren! I have found the true Guru. He is not claiming the Guruship. He is hiding himself. Let us request him to come out of his seclusion and guide us."

Hearing the excited outbursts of Makhan Shah, crowds of Sikh came to the Guru. They requested him to accept the spiritual leadership of the community.

They earnestly requested him to tear away the falsehood of the pretenders.

The Guru acceded to their request. He came out of his hiding place. There were rejoicings among the Sikhs. The Guru was duly seated on the throne. With the emergence of the true Guru, the pretenders disappeared from the scene, as the darkness of night disappears with the appearance of the sun.

## **21. From Bakala to Anandpur**

Makhan Shah Lubana succeeded in discovering the true Guru. Guru Teg Bahadur took the seat of the Guru. He was shouldering all the responsibilities of the office of Guruship. His piety, hospitality and the saintly disposition were well known. Soon crowds of Sikh began visiting him. Most of the Masands also started recognising him the Guru. They also presented the tithes. Makhan Shah had made valuable offerings. The Guru's headquarters then hummed with all sorts of religious activities.

Dhirmal could not bear all that. He was burning with rage. He was not a saint to have control over his base emotions. He provoked his men to attack the Guru and plunder his property. A Masand named Sheehn fired at the Guru. The bullet hit the Guru's shoulder. Dhirmal's men ransacked the Guru's house and took away everything they laid their hand on.

When Makhan Shah heard about the outrageous act of Dhirmal, he attacked his house and his men not only took back the Guru's property but also all that they could find in his house. They even took possession of the Granth Sahib.

The Guru advised them to give back the Granth

Sahib and other things, which belonged to Dhir-mal. He reminded the Sikhs that the followers of Guru Nanak never cast their greedy looks on anything that belonged to others. He also advised them that they should have control over the mean emotions like lust, anger greed, debased attachment and pride.

The Guru stayed at Bakala for some time. The chain of visiting Sikh Sangat was going on. The Guru and the Sikhs celebrated the festival of Diwali at Baba Bakala. He, then, decided to visit Amritsar and other places which had become sacred because of the activities of the previous Gurus there.

The Guru and the Sikh Sangat, including Makhan Shah Lubana, reached Amritsar on November 22, 1664. The management of Darbar Sahib Amritsar was under the stewardship of Har Ji. Har Ji was the son of Meharban and the grandson of Prithi Chand.

Hearing the arrival of the Guru, Har Ji locked the doors of Darshani Deodi. Finding the entry doors closed, Guru Teg Bahadur seated himself on a platform near the building of Akal Takhat. Then the Guru and the Sikhs had their bath in the tank of nectar. They formed the assembly. The Guru took his seat on the platform. The assembly of the Sikhs listened to his words full of divine wisdom. They all recited the Gurbani and said the prayer.

Makhan Shah consulted the Guru saying, "If you give your consent, we shall deal with Har Ji and party, as we have dealt with Dhirmal and his men. We shall straighten them right to hand over the keys of Darbar Sahib to you." But Guru Teg Bahadur did not agree with Makhan Shah and restrained him from doing anything that might bring dishonour to the sanctity of Darbar Sahib.

Before dusk the Guru left for the village Walla. The villagers served him with the utmost humility. They sought his advice to explain how they could escape the fear of death. What means they should adopt to sail away safely through the stormy ocean of the world. The Guru said, "God's name is the only mean. He is not far away. He resides in your heart. As there is fragrance in the flower, so is God in our being. As we see our reflection in the mirror, so we should see God's shadow in every heart. Thus, we should never hurt, the heart of any man with our hard and unkind behaviour". The Guru stayed at the village Walla for three days. Then he visited some other places including Tarn Taran.

Guru Har Gobind, Guru Har Rai and Guru Har Krishan had made Kiratpur as their headquarters. The farsighted Guru Teg Bahadur foreguessed the feud and jealousy, he had to face from his relatives there. So, he did not make Kiratpur his seat. Instead, he purchased the village of Makhawal

from the Raja of Kahloor. It was just a few kilometres from Kiratpur. This place was surrounded by the hills. The atmosphere was attractive and strategically it was ideal for defence. Guru Teg Bahadur was deeply attached to his mother, Mata Nanaki. She had moulded the personality of Guru Teg Bahadur to a great extent. So, Guru Teg Bahadur named Makhawal as Chak Nanaki. Thus, he made Chak Nanaki as his headquarters.

Guru Teg Bahadur then turned his attention towards preaching. Guru Nanak had established Sikh Sangats in the north-eastern parts of India. The links with those Sangats were intact, one way or the other. But the personal contact of the Guru was the need of the hour. After Guru Nanak, Guru Teg Bahadur proved to be the greatest traveller. He took his mother, his wife, and some Sikhs with him and set out on his preaching mission.

He visited Mathura, Allahabad, Benaras, Gaya, Patna, Dhaka and even Assam. Patna is an important ancient city. The Guru left Mata Nanaki and his wife Mata Gujri there. Mata Gujri was pregnant. So, the ladies, Kirpal, the brother of Mata Gujri and a few attendants were left behind to attend on her.

Raja Ram Singh of Amber was sent by Aurangzeb against the Raja of Assam. He took Guru Teg Bahadur with him. The Guru restored peace between the two Rajas. The Raja of Assam,

Chad Dhawaj, was very grateful to the Guru. He became his Sikh. He kept on his relations with Guru Gobind Singh. He presented him a white elephant and some rare weapons of war when he himself visited Anandpur after the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur.

After securing peace between the two Rajas, the Guru returned to Dhaka in East Bengal. Dhaka is now the capital of Bangla Desh. Here he received the news of the birth of his son, the future Guru Gobind Singh. Guru Gobind Singh was born on December 26, 1666. After some time he reached Patna. There were great rejoicings. The Guru opened Langars and did other charitable acts. While rejoicings and festivities were going on at Patna, the disturbing and painful news came from the Punjab. The tyranny of the rulers had surpassed all limits there. The people were fear stricken. The Guru's lesson was, "Keep your mind free from fear. Let the fear of God reside in your heart. You should frighten none and fear none." But the sceptre of the cruel rule was having a naked dance. The Guru must be with the people to save them from their miserable plight. So, leaving his family at Patna, he hastened to Punjab to share the agony of the people.

Reaching Punjab, he travelled from village to village. He advised the people to be bold. They should uphold their faith even at the cost of their

lives. They should fear God and none else. They should lead an honourable life upholding the dignity of their faith. Thus, he strived to embolden his people. He also preached the pious and virtuous doctrines of his religion.

Free from his preaching mission, he decided to attend to his family. Thus, he sent Sikhs to bring back, son, wife, mother and other members to Chak Nanaki. Gobind Rai was then a boy of six years. His father, Guru Teg Bahadur, was so much occupied and concerned with the plight of his people that after the period of six long years, he found time to call back his family. Gobind Rai and the family reached Chak Nanaki. There were rejoicings in the town. To commemorate the arrival of Gobind Rai, the name of Chak Nanaki was changed into Anandpur.



## **22. Early life of Guru Teg Bahadur**

Guru Teg Bahadur was the youngest son of Guru Har Gobind. Mata Nanaki was his blessed mother, who gave birth to him on April 1, 1621 at Amritsar. Guru Har Gobind touched the feet of the child and predicted that the child would be fearless, courageous, spiritually adorable, defender of Dharma and a relentless fighter against cruelty and injustice. The prediction proved to be true. Guru Teg Bahadur sacrificed his life to save the Dharma.

Different persons influenced Guru Teg Bahadur in moulding his personality. From his mother, he imbibed the tenderness of heart and love for devotion and solitude. His heart was so merciful and tender that he could not bear the sight of a naked and hungry child.

The occasion was the marriage of Baba Gurditta, the eldest brother of Guru Teg Bahadur. The marriage party was about to leave for Batala. The whole town of Amritsar seemed to have come to witness the festivities. Guru Teg Bahadur was then just, a child of four. Among the crowd of people, the child Guru saw a feeble bodied naked child. He was so much overwhelmed with sympathy for the pathetic condition of the child, that he took off

his dress. He, then, made him put on his dress. He also gave him the golden bracelets, he was wearing. He came back naked and without the golden bracelets. Mata Nanaki saw him in such a state. She said, "Dear son! Where is your dress and where are the golden bracelets? The child Guru told his mother that he had covered the nakedness of a poor boy. He had given those things to him. The incident was a clear indication that the child would put curtain of his own person to save the honour of his country, if the oppressors forcibly tried to unclothe her honour

From his father, Guru Har Gobind, he had inherited his wonderful physique, fearlessness, courage and the qualities of a saint-soldier. Baba Budda Ji trained him to be a skilful rider and an adept swordsman. Guru Teg Bahadur was only fourteen year old, when he took part in the battle of Kartarpur. His father was so much impressed by his feats in the battle field, that he changed his name from Tyag Mal to Teg Bahadur.

Bhai Gurdas imparted the religious and spiritual training. Under his guidance, he began writing poetry. The excellence of his poetic calibre needs no proof. Guru Teg Bahadur daily attended the congregation at Darbar Sahib Amritsar. He listened to the Gurbani. He, himself, recited the Gurbani. The atmosphere of Darbar Sahib, the company of Bhai Gurdas and the influence of his

mother made him attain the spiritual heights. He had full control over his mind. He was a man of peaceful disposition. Though he had accompanied his father in his warfares, he had also accompanied him in his hunting tours, his father had left his arms with him, yet he was infact a saint. He had no attachment to wealth. To him it was like the shade of a cloud, which lasts only for a short period.

His father asked him to make Bakala his residence. He obeyed without saying why. His father installed his grandson, Har Rai to the Gurugaddi. Not for once did he show any resentment. Guru Har Rai made Guru Har Krishan his successor, neither he, nor his mother Nanaki had the slightest protest. All these things show that he was a saint of very high order. He was least after pelf and power.

He had witnessed the splendour of his father at Kiratpur. When he became the Guru, he adopted the same style of living, but that was essential to maintain the dignity of the Guru, who was called the True King by his followers.

Before becoming the Guru, Guru Teg Bahadur spent twelve long years in the village of Bakala. His mother, his wife and some Sikhs were with him. There he spent most of his time in meditation and devotion to God. Being a householder he did attend to his duties towards his family also. But it

seemed that the long period of devotion and solitude was for attaining the spiritual heights. It was to perfect himself for the accomplishment of a supreme cause.

We see when he assumed the responsibility of the Guru, he preached, "Mind should be free from fear and the head be held high. One should not lose Dharma under the weight of oppressor's tyranny." He said, "Those who bear fear in their minds are cowards and those who frighten are fools".

# **23. Guru Teg Bahadur**

## **Hind Di Chadar**

### **(The Saviour of India's Honour)**

Emperor Aurangzeb was a fanatic Sunni Muslim. He had come to the throne with the help of bigot Muslim nobles and intolerant Mullhas. They suggested to him to make India a country exclusively for the Muslims. Under their influence, he had deprived the Hindus of many privileges. A religious tax Jizya was reimposed on them. Their schools were closed. They could not build new temples. Some of the old temples were demolished. They were not permitted to ride the Arabian horses. Many more restrictions were imposed on them.

In the Punjab, Guru Teg Bahadur was respected even by the Muslims. He had his friendship with Sufi saints like Saifuddin. Official reports from Lahore and Sirhind reached the Emperor that Guru Teg Bahadur's teachings of "Neither frighten any one nor sustain fear in mind from any one" were making people bold to resist the Emperor's zeal of converting the Hindus into the Muslim fold.

The Brahmans were the religious leaders of the

Hindu community. They were more learned than the other segments of the Hindu populace. The Pundits of Kashmir were the most learned of all. The beautiful valley of Kashmir had a large population of the learned Pundits. They were looked upon as the leaders of the Hindu community.

The bigoted Maulvis and the intolerant councillors had proposed to the Emperor that if he could convert the Brahmans to Islam, the general populace of Hindu community would follow suit. They assured him that this way the whole of India would completely become a Muslim state.

Under Aurangzeb there was no constitution to be followed to govern the country. The will of the sovereign was the law of the land. The only exception was that it should not oppose the Quranic injunctions. Courts were the centres of corruption. The bigotry and fanaticism of the Emperor had deprived the Hindus of getting justice from the courts. They (The Hindus) were governed by a different code of law. Their plight was pitiable. They felt the oppressive sword of the ruler always hanging over their heads. According to Aurangzeb's belief, the conversion of Hindus to Islam was a noble act. So, he was zealous to make forcible conversions. He did not think that such an aggressive attitude of the Emperor was against the spirit of Islam. Sher Afghan was the Governor

of Kashmir. He received the royal orders to force the Pundits of the valley either to embrace Islam or face death. The Subedar of Lahore was Zalam Khan. He was also asked to arrest the Sikh movement and create such conditions for the Hindus as would force them to embrace Islam.

Sher Afghan called the leaders of the Pundit community to his office. He bluntly told them either to embrace Islam or face death. The Pundits were aghast to hear the command of the Governor. They requested him to give them some time to consult their coreligionists. The Governor gave them six months for their final decision. He reported the Emperor accordingly.

The Pundits of the valley consulted the Pundits of Kurukshetra and Gopal Mochan. They came to the conclusion that Guru Teg Bahadur was the only holy man in the whole of India, who could provide them with some solace. He could be the sole champion of their cause. So, they decided to go to Anandpur Sahib. They made Pundit Kirpa Ram of Matan (Kashmir) as their spokesman.

The deputation of Pundits reached Anandpur. It waited upon the Guru. It was received at Guru's Darbar with due courtesy. Pundit Kirpa Ram related his tale of woes. He told the Guru that the intolerant Governor was bent upon converting them to Muslim fold. He had given them a few months time to arrive at their decision. They had

to choose between death and Islam. They were overawed by him because the given time was going to expire very shortly. Pundit Kirpa Ram further stated that they had sought his shelter, thinking that he was the only spiritual head to show them the light and make them come out of the blind alley. He said that they were passing through the bitterest ordeal as the honour of whole of India was at stake.

Guru Teg Bahadur patiently listened to the pathetic tales of the Pundits. He then went into a trance. He deeply pondered over the matter. After a while, when the Guru opened his eyes, there was a strange divine spark visible.

The Pandits felt an unrelenting kind of confidence in them. Guru Teg Bahadur remarked that the naked fanaticism had clouded the mind of the Emperor. He had adopted the wrong course of intolerance and tyranny. Depriving the subjects of their right of worship was an offence. To put an end to the tyrannical rule of a fanatic and to keep the Dharma alive, a great holy man had to sacrifice his life. Only then the storm of oppression could be arrested.

Gobind Rai, then only a nine year old boy, was sitting beside his father. He had heard all that was discussed between the Pundits and the Guru. Finding that the assembly was in grave and serious mood while thinking over the situation, he



said to the Guru," Revered father, if the storm of oppression could be checked by the sacrifice of a holy life, then check it, by giving your life, who is holier than you in the whole of India?

The Guru was very much struck by the remarks of his young son. The spark of confidence appeared in his eyes. He told the Pundits that the hour had come to uproot the tree of oppression. He said to the Pundits," Go and tell your Subedar that if Guru Teg Bahadur embraces Islam as his religion, the whole of India will become Muslim. Then there will be no need of bloody and forcible conversions."

The Pundits were over awed. But the Guru encouraged them. They bowed their heads. Then, they took leave of the Guru. First, they saw the Governor of Lahore, Zalam Khan. They told him to convey to the Emperor that with the single conversion of Guru Teg Bahadur, the whole of Northern India would embrace the religion of prophet, Mohammed. Similarly, they told the Governor of Kashmir that the entire population of Pundits of the valley would change their religion the day, Guru Teg Bahadur accepted Islam as his religion.

Emperor Aurangzeb was camping at Hassan Abdal, fighting against the insurgent Pathan tribes. The reports from the two Governors reached him. He was pleased to know that his

dream of seeing India the land of the faithfuls (Only the Muslims) would be realised with a single conversion. It appeared to him as an easy task. He directed the Subedars of Lahore and Sirhind to keep a strict watch on the activities of Guru Teg Bahadur. Very shortly he summoned Guru Teg Bahadur to Delhi through the Subedar of Sirhind.

Guru Teg Bahadur had already made up his mind for the supreme sacrifice. He had foreseen the impendent eventuality. In the meantime, the officials reached Anandpur Sahib with the summons. The Guru told the officials that he would be reaching Delhi in due course. He was not a convict. He had done nothing against the Govt. His only offence was that he championed the cause of the Hindus. So, the officials did not press him to accompany them.

The Guru took with him five Sikhs i.e. Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Dyala Ji, Sati Dass, Bhai Udha Ji and Bhai Gurditta Ji. Mata Gujri was ordained to stay at Anandpur and take care of Gobind Rai.

While on his way to Delhi, the Guru halted at many places. At every place he told the assembled Sikhs to keep their minds free of fear, they should also not practise frightening other people. Leaving Anandpur his first halt was at Kiratpur, followed by other halts at Saifabad, Samana, Kaithal, Lakhna Majra, Rohtak and Agra.

Guru Teg Bahadur was arrested at Agra. Before

his arrest he had sent back to Anandpur Bhai Udho Ji and Bhai Gurditta Ji to inform the Sikh Sangat of his arrest. Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Dyala Ji and Bhai Sati Dass Ji, the three remaining Sikhs were also arrested along with the Guru.

The Guru and the Sikhs were made prisoners and brought to Delhi. They were first kept in an old building. Then, they were shifted to Chandni Chowk Kotwali. Guru Teg Bahadur was kept in a cage. There were spikes fitted in its internal walls. The Guru could neither stand nor rest his back with the walls. The sharp tips of the spikes hurt his body.

By the orders of the Emperor, he was asked to accept any one of the three conditions for his release. Accept Islam as his religion, show a miracle or face death. The Guru said that he would not lose his faith. He told that it did not behove men of God to show miracles. He was ready to face death to save the honour of mother India from the bigoted tyrants.

To terrorise the Guru, his Sikhs were inflicted with horrible tortures. Bhai Mati Dass was the Guru's Diwan. He was the head of Bhai family of Karyala in the Jhelum District. It is now in Pakistan. He was a devout Sikh. He was fastened in twains. He was asked what his last wish was. He replied that his face be kept towards the Guru. He was sawed alive. He kept reciting Jap Ji Sahib, when

the saw was piercing through his body. Bhai Mati Dass showed unshakable courage and devotion for his faith. He courted martyrdom in the holy presence of his Lord, Guru Teg Bahadur.

Then came the turn of Bhai Dyala Ji. He was the real brother of Bhai Mani Singh Longowal (Sangrur). He was boiled alive in a cauldron. The holy words of the Guru were on his lips when he was being boiled alive. His prayers were that the Guru might bless him the requisite fortitude to remain unflinching in his faith.

Bhai Sati Das was Bhai Mati Dass's younger brother. He was wrapped from head to foot in cotton, then kerosene oil was poured on him. He was burnt alive to death. Facing the inhuman tortures boldly, he kept on reciting the Gurbani and was roasted alive.

On November 11, 1675, the Guru was brought out from the cage. He was made to sit under the tree near the well. This site is just close to the Kotwali at Chandi Chowk, Delhi. The Chief Qazi, Wahab Ali read out the sentence and the executioner Jalal-ud-din of Samana (Patiala) beheaded the holy Guru, Teg Bahadur.

After the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur in Chandi Chowk, Delhi was rocked with a terrible storm. In the confusion that ensued Bhai Jaita Ji and Bhai Addo Ji showed rare feats of valour and took away the holy head of the Guru to Anandpur

Sahib. There, Guru Gobind Singh fondly embraced Bhai Jaita Ji saying, "Rangrete- Guru-Ke-Bete "The scavengers are the dear sons of the Guru." The sacred head was cremated there at Anandpur.

Bhai Lakhi Shah and his son Nigahia, the Labana Sikhs of the Guru, unmindful of the consequences of their daring action, took the holy body to their village Rakab Ganj. They carried the body in a cart. They cremated the body with due respect, setting their house on fire for this purpose. At the place, where the holy body was cremated by the devout Sikhs, stands the Gurudwara Rakab Ganj Delhi.

Guru Teg Bahadur saved the honour of India by sacrificing his life, so, the grateful nation remembers him saying, "Guru Teg Bahadur Hind Di Chadar, (The Saviour of the Honour of India)".

